

cement industry update



Issue 21, June 2005

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Industry News

Building Regulations Update

The British Cement Association is actively lobbying in the UK and Europe to ensure a level playing field for cement manufacturers in terms of overall European legislation. Key issues for the industry are set out below:

Code for Sustainable Buildings – This initiative by the Sustainable Buildings Task Force aims to develop a framework for procurement, design and construction of sustainable buildings. The cement and concrete industries however feel that life cost aspects have not been covered sufficiently. Summer time performance needs to be considered, otherwise the increasing burden on energy demands caused by personal domestic air-conditioning units would be a major risk to Government targets of reducing CO2 emissions. The Task Force

is also focusing heavily on construction and recycling, and not enough on where real value can be added, which is at design and procurement stages.

European Standards – BCA Standards and Technical ensures that authoritative guidance and support is available to make a smooth transition from British to European Standards. Eurocodes are welcomed, as the industry believes they are the most technically advanced suite of design codes available anywhere in the world and offer significant opportunities for the UK construction sector. The engineering community however are calling for Government support with the introduction of Eurocodes, as they represent major expense to SMEs who may go out of practice without the financial help.

Sustainable and Secure Buildings Bill (S&SBA) – The S&SBA will enable building regulations to embrace sustainability more fully, facilitate the application of the regulations on new, extended and altered buildings and enable the UK to meet its requirements under the EU Directive on Energy Performance in Buildings. The cement and concrete industries are actively campaigning to draw attention to the importance of whole life performance with regard to material selection.

Reduction in support for research and standards development – The onus is on industry to delivery standards necessary to support Building Regulation. The cement industry is providing the resource to write and update these standards, but this is only part of the supply chain and end use design standards are seeing a diminishing level of support. Support from Government to meet industry half-way is being called for.

NAO study into Modern Methods of Construction – The industry feels this study is highly limited, as it is only considering four methods of construction: traditional, open panel timber frame, advance timber frame and lightweight steel volume. The cement industry lobbied successfully for a concrete option, and a precast solution was included. However, the bias is on off-site manufacture and not modern methods of construction as it should be.

The industry subscribes to adding real value at the front end (procurement and planning), rather than looking again at construction methods. Whole life aspects need to be considered, an area where some of the lightweight options fare badly.

Madrid Windsor Fire

A small delegation including technical experts from the BCA and The Concrete Centre visited Madrid where a 30 storey concrete frame building, Windsor Torre, survived an intense fire which raged through the upper floors in February. The visit was hosted by IECA, which is the Spanish Institute for Cement and its Applications. The technical experts gained an insight into why the fire propagated the way it did and the performance of the frame of the building.

Failure of the frame was contained to the steel perimeter columns. The [Arup review](#) found that 'the central concrete core performed well in the fire and seemed to have played a major role in ensuring the stability of the building throughout the incident'. Dr Pal Chana, Technical Director of BCA said "this is an example of the excellent performance of a concrete frame designed using traditional methods and subjected to an intense fire. It also highlights the risks to steel construction when active fire protection measures fail or are not included in steel frame construction".

An increasing demand on land space brings a greater need for high rise residential and commercial buildings. Fire design and robustness are crucial in the design of these building, and the lessons learnt provide valuable insight to apply to future construction projects.

[Photograph](#) of Windsor Torre building, supplied by CEMBUREAU.

Environment

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State of the environment 2005

The Environment Agency's (EA) latest report is an overview of the state of the environment in England and Wales. Pollution by industry, air and water quality have improved, but pollution from traffic, urban sprawl and farming needs to be tackled.

Specific objectives include:

Clean Air For Europe (CAFÉ) – A new strategy for Europe is expected in 2005, outlining the environmental objectives for air quality and measures that the UK and other Member States need to take to protect people's health and the environment from air pollution.

Contaminated land – Local authorities and the EA will continue to oversee the clean up and re-use of contaminated land to minimise risk to the environment and meet the Government's target of building 60 per cent of new homes on brownfield sites by 2008.

Modern regulation – The EA will help businesses improve their efficiency by adopting a risk based approach to regulation, targeting its resources where there is the greatest risk to the environment. The Agency will complete

the roll out of Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control in 2007.

[Full report](#) available from the EA website.

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Parliament Update

Better Regulation Action Plan

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, launched a Better Regulation Action Plan to improve flexibility and business by breaking down barriers holding enterprise back. Instead of routine regulation attempting to cover all, a risk based approach will be adopted. Objectives of the plan:

- Set targets to reduce burden upon business
- Legislating to implement Hampton review and to speed up deregulation
- Fewer regulatory bodies, applying risk-based enforcement
- Risk-based enforcement by local authorities
- Simplifying and shortening forms
- Reforming penalty systems
- European regulatory reform
- Strengthening institutions to deliver regulatory reform
- Improving tax administration for business

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Events

Global construction: ultimate concrete opportunities

5-7 July 2005, Dundee

Further information: Visit ctucongress.co.uk

Controlling Hazardous Waste

12 July 2005, London

Further information: Visit controllinghazardouswaste.com

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BCA in the news

BCA media coverage for May

<u>Article</u>	<u>Media</u>	<u>Issue</u>
Dr Pal Chana appointment	Concrete	May 05
Cement Industry achieves climate change target	Semento Shinbun (Japanese journal)	16 May 05

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