

1. Introduction

If there is one question that characterises the UK market for fencing, decking and ground contact wood it's service life performance. Just how long will treated wood last? No product will flourish if buyers lack confidence in its performance so the Wood Protection Association (WPA) has invested in a number of strategic initiatives to help industry raise the bar on treatment quality and performance. The WPA strategy has three key interconnected elements:

- 1) a quality assurance scheme for treated wood;
- 2) an approval scheme for preservatives that establishes the preservative retention required to protect timber in ground contact and
- 3) establishing a long-term field trial of softwood deck and fence posts to assess durability performance. The first preservative products to be approved under this scheme are presented in Table 1 of this document.

2. About the WPA Benchmark Wood Preservative Approval Scheme

The WPA Benchmark Wood Preservative Approval Scheme (WPAS) provides the UK treatment industry with an independent expert assessment of the data used by manufacturers to set the retention levels necessary to achieve the performance specifications defined in the wood preservation British Standard – BS8417. The WPA Benchmark Approval Scheme for wood preservatives was developed for the WPA by a task group comprising all the major suppliers of preservatives in the UK and independent technical consultants.

The main features of the WPA Benchmark Approval Scheme for wood preservatives are:

- a) it is for preservatives applied by a penetrating processes, - vacuum pressure or double-vacuum;
- b) it is specifically for applications where wood is in permanent contact with the ground or freshwater i.e. BS8417 Use Class 4 applications – both 15 years and 30 years desired service life specifications are included;
- c) it complements the WPA Benchmark quality certification scheme for treated wood;
- d) manufacturers applying for WPA approval of a preservative must provide the laboratory and field test data as prescribed in the scheme document for the use class and service life combinations for which approval is requested;
- e) approval is based on the minimum retention to be found in the analytical zone after treatment to meet BS 8417 requirements for use class and service life (15 or 30 years) combinations;
- f) assessment of data is carried out by a panel made up of leading independent experts drawn from the industry, BRE and Exova;
- g) the independent panel reports to the WPA and its decision is final;
- h) participation in the scheme is voluntary;
- i) the WPA Benchmark quality scheme is available to all operators of industrial impregnation plant who require third-party verification that a specified product has been treated in accordance with British Standard requirements.

A copy of the Wood Preservative Approval Scheme Document is available from the WPA.

Table 1: Wood Preservatives and Retentions Approved by the WPA

PRESERVATIVE NAME	WPA Benchmark Approved Retention ¹ kg/m ³	
	BS8417 Use Class 4 (Permanent ground contact)	
	Service life 15 yrs ²	Service life 30 yrs ²
Impra ACQ 2200D	21.5	32.3
Tanalith E 8000 ³	17.5	26.3
Wolmanit CX-8	17.0	25.5
Wolmanit CX-10	13.6	20.4
The following product has been assessed by the independent panel and will be included in the list of WPA approved products when HSE approval is granted		
Calcure C4	14.7	22.1

Table 1 Notes

1. The approved retention is the minimum amount of preservative to be found, after treatment with the relevant preservative, in the analytical zone of softwood species (in accordance with relevant use class/service life specifications in the WPA Manual - *Industrial Wood Preservation* and BS 8417).
The approved retentions are minimum figures and no variation below the figures given is permitted when treatment to the approved level has been specified.
2. 'Service life' has the same meaning as 'Desired service life' in the WPA Manual *Industrial Wood Preservation* and BS 8417.
3. Evidence of effectiveness in hardwood species has been presented and accepted. The approved retentions therefore also confer protection to treated hardwood species in the relevant use class and service life combination (unless a

About this Approval Scheme

Approval relates only to protection against the relevant biological agencies and does not consider physical, chemical or environmental properties of the preservative. Approval is valid in the UK. The approval holder is responsible for informing WPA if the formulation of the preservative is changed. An independent panel will then consider according to EN 599-1, Annex A, if the changes will require a re-testing of the preservative. The WPA may withdraw an approval immediately, after consulting the approval holder, if the preservative's biological efficacy fails in practical use. The approval holder is responsible for informing the WPA if information on the efficacy of an approved product that might affect the conclusions of the independent panel comes into its possession and the approval will be independently reviewed.

The WPA will publish, normally once per year, an updated list of approved preservatives. The list will include current minimum retentions for each use class for which the respective preservative manufacturer applied for WPA approval. The list of approved preservatives can be found in the 'Quality' section on the WPA web site www.wood-protection.org

The WPA reserves the right to amend, update or otherwise change this Scheme to reflect technical progress or for any other reason.

Disclaimer

Approved retentions are derived from data provided by an applicant (a WPA manufacturer member) on that applicant's responsibility. Each applicant remains responsible for the performance of its product both in laboratory and field trials and in wood treated with the product. Neither the WPA nor any agent thereof have or accept liability for the efficacy of approved product(s) or the performance of wood treated with those products. Sole responsibility for fitness for purpose of a treated commodity rests with the business that places that commodity on the market
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