



News release

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WPA plays leading role in revision of wood preservation Standard

On 1 November, BSI will release the revised draft of BS 8417 *Preservation of Timber – Recommendations* for public consultation. The revision has been carried out by BSI committee B515 which is chaired by Wood Protection Association (WPA) Chairman, Chris Coggins.

The first noticeable revision is to the title of this draft Standard. It is now known as BS 8417 *Preservation of wood – Code of practice*. WPA director Steve Young says that the change of name is because the revision will supersede both the previous versions of BS 8417 2003 and A1 2007 as well as BS 1282:1999 *Wood preservatives – Guide on choice, use and application*. He explains: "Much of the information in BS 1282 is out of date, but instead of updating this as a separate Standard it was decided to update and move the important information into BS 8417 to make all guidance relating to industrial wood preservation available within one Standard".

The WPA says that many of its members had asked if the revised BS 8417 could be made less complicated to interpret and this request has been championed by the WPA representatives that form the active participants of the BSI Standards review committee B515. "The considerable re-write undertaken has taken this on board and we believe the new draft will improve significantly the use of the new BS 8417 to the benefit the wood preservation industry" comments Steve.

Within the revised draft, the treatment recommendation tables retain the same format as previously. Gone are the tables relating to CCA preservatives conforming with BS 4072 and organic solvent based preservatives conforming with BS 5707 due to lack of use. And where previously there were two tables concerning boron treatments (one for dry timber and one for diffusion into green timber), there is now only one table for all boron treatments.

The penetration classes in the Standard have been updated to the "NP" classes now given in the updated BS EN 351-1. However, although the numbers differ they are largely similar to the "P" classes that they have replaced within BS 8417, so in most cases the recommendations are unchanged or only slightly altered.

The recommendations for preservatives tested in accordance with BS EN 599-1 are given in table 4 (previously table 9). Previously the recommendations were given in terms of the critical value ("cv"). The new recommendations are given in terms of "R", with R qualified by a number identifying the relevant use class. R represents the lowest retentions appropriate for a given end use and is declared by the manufacturer. Although R cannot be less than cv, manufacturers are required by BS EN 599-1 to take into account factors that may affect the biological performance of the treated wood that are not taken into account in laboratory tests, which may cause R to be higher than cv. For use class 4, R₄ is derived using field tests as

well as laboratory tests (previously field tests were only required in UC4 for uses with a desired service life of 30 years or more).

Changes affecting the treatment batch recommended acceptable quality levels (AQL) within BS EN 351-1 have also been adopted into BS 8417. The AQL for timbers classed as permeable remains at 10%, and the AQL for sawn resistant timbers remains at 25%. However, the AQL for round resistant timbers is now 10%. Treaters of round resistant timbers will need to ensure that the higher quality level is being achieved. The revised draft gives guidance on the treatment of resistant species.

“WPA member input to the revision process has been invaluable” says Steve Young who adds: “The frontline experience of WPA treaters with the newer wood preservatives has been particularly relevant in parts of this revision concerning those species classed as resistant to treatment like spruce.”

The public consultation period for the revised BS 8417 expires on 31 December 2010. Publication of the new Standard is anticipated in the first half of 2011.

Commenting on compliance, Steve said that the WPA had already briefed its treater members and sent them a copy of the revised Standard. “Our advice to our members is to consult their preservative suppliers to verify what changes may be required to ensure continuing compliance with the new Standard”. He also confirmed that compliance with the new Standard and an audit of the operating regime of individual treatment plants will form the basis of a treated wood quality scheme that would be introduced by the WPA in collaboration with leading wood treaters in early 2011.

ENDS

The Wood Protection Association is an independent, not for profit, technical and advisory organisations that enjoys lead body status with Standards setters and regulatory authorities in the UK.

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