
From: Brian Martin
Sent: 30 May 2008 14:59
To: Anthony Burd
Subject: FW: Innovative Construction Products and Techniques

From: Brian Martin
Sent: Tuesday, March 25, 2008 10:21 AM
To: 'larry.cody@rockwool.co.uk'
Cc: Anthony Burd; Tracey Cull
Subject: RE: Innovative Construction Products and Techniques

Dear Larry

As you have rightly supposed, Anthony is extremely busy in his new role, which is why he has asked me to respond on his behalf.

Thank you for letting us know what you are working on and for your offer to contribute to any work that the Department may be taking forward. It's early days yet but we will of course bear you in mind if and when any such work progresses.

Best Regards
Brian Martin

From: Larry Cody (RWGB) [mailto:larry.cody@rockwool.co.uk]
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2008 12:14 PM
To: Anthony Burd
Cc: Nick Ralph (RWGB); Simon Dutta (RWGB)
Subject: Innovative Construction Products and Techniques

Dear Anthony,

I hope you are settling well into your new role in the Department. You must be a very busy man these days, as we don't see so much of you on the fire circuit. However, I've no intention of letting you escape from fire matters entirely and would therefore ask you to consider the following:

During the last month Rockwool has been assessing the DCLG report for Innovative Construction Products and Techniques - BD 2503. As manufacturers of non-combustible insulation and fire protection products, many of the issues covered in this report have been of very great interest to us for a number of years and as such, we have developed products, systems and expertise relevant to these methods of construction. Having witnessed the speed and extent of damage resulting from fires in buildings during recent years, we share the concern that traditional methods of evaluating the risk from such events may not be sufficiently adequate in their current form to be applied directly to alternative construction methods and products. Indeed, we believe that in certain circumstances, new and possibly larger scale tests may be necessary to adequately assess the performance of a construction system, such as the relatively new BS 8414 tests for spread of fire on facades.

The Project Steering Committee identified seven main tasks and although some can be recognised as desk top exercises, many concluded that further development work would be required to provide strategies for implementing safe procedures when considering Innovative Construction products and Techniques. We also note in the report that one of the specific objectives of the project was to consider the performance of cavity/fire barriers in these innovative constructions and to develop suitable methods of test to allow this performance to be evaluated. A prime example of the work Rockwool has been carrying out is the development of our cavity barrier systems, which were originally tested in traditional twin skin masonry cavities. Having recognised the changes in building techniques, we have recently extended the scope of these products by evaluating their performance in timber framed constructions and will be looking at metal frame constructions in the near future. Similarly, we have also been involved in evaluating fire stops behind external cladding systems.

As I am sure that you are fully aware, many of the larger house building companies, including those involved in developing apartment blocks, are rightly attempting to compile standard construction details to meet the requirements of Building Regulations. These apply to both on-site constructions and off-site pre-prepared 'kits'. Rockwool is regularly approached by these organisations seeking our opinion on such details and even though many of the initial enquiries are of a thermal or acoustic nature, on many occasions we have had to voice our concerns with regard to the expected performance of such details in a fire scenario. It has become increasingly clear to us that some architects and designers do not fully appreciate the way certain construction products will react when exposed to fire and the effect this could have in promoting the fire spread throughout a building.

This situation reinforces not just the need for the development of safe practices for innovative construction techniques and consideration of the products involved, as identified in the report, but also the wide dissemination and adoption of the information it intends to provide. To assist in achieving this goal, Rockwool would like to offer its experience through active participation in any Key Stakeholder forums which may be deemed necessary, especially in the development work proposed in Task 7. Having looked at the project steering group members list, it is not clear who we should approach with this offer. As a member yourself, I would therefore ask if you could forward this message to the appropriate person on the steering group and if possible, request confirmation that our offer will be given due consideration.

Best regards,

Larry Cody
Technical Marketing Consultant

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