

related test method

subject

Accreditation of laboratories performing classification work under the new European test and classification system

reference of original query

TC4 N138, TC4 N152, TC4 N153, TC4 N155

Problem

Most of the test standards for reaction to fire and resistance to fire are now published as are some parts of the EN 13501 classification standards. Additionally, several product standards are now available and many more will become available in the near future, such that the new European test and classification system can become fully functional.

National members of European Accreditation, EA - the European Accreditation Bodies, in performing accreditation of fire test laboratories to EN ISO/IEC 17025 adopt differing attitudes towards including work done by laboratories to the EN 13501 (classification standards) in the scope of accreditation of those laboratories performing such classification work. Some accreditation bodies will give accreditation as part of EN ISO/IEC 17025, others claim this is a matter for accreditation towards EN 45004 (or even to EN 45011).

Therefore as a result it is permissible for some laboratories to write "Classification Reports" as accredited bodies and for others it is not permissible, despite this activity being a key activity within the new European test and classification system.

Recommendation

Providing classification reports to the EN 13501 series is a fundamental part of fire testing under the European system. This work does not represent type approval or certification (see as an example EN13501-1, B.6.2).

The test and classification reports form part of the certification process. The issue of certification reports under the European system (for CE marking) is the responsibility of Notified Bodies (any Test, Inspection or Certification Body, including the delegated test laboratory) under Guidance Paper G.

The issue of classification / certification reports outside the European system (for e.g. national purposes) is the responsibility of the test laboratory performing the test.

Classification should be the responsibility of the test laboratory (responsible for the test) and that the scope of accreditation of laboratories performing such activities should include the EN 13501 series (even though the parts of this series are not test methods, but are vital extensions of the



test methods (they define what needs to be tested, require interpretation of the test data and what needs to be reported).

If more than one laboratory is involved in carrying out the fire tests, one of these laboratories shall prepare the classification report. In doing this, the laboratory shall consult with the other laboratories to ensure that their test reports have been interpreted correctly.

When the competence of a laboratory to issue classification report is evaluated for accreditation or similar purposes, this evaluation should be done against ISO/IEC 17025 taking into account the relevant classification standard and testing standards.

The following wording covering this situation is accepted amongst EGOLF members, and should be accepted by their accreditation bodies

“Accreditation bodies already provide accreditation of laboratories to ISO/IEC 17025 for the fire test methods that they undertake.

Undertaking a classification to EN 13501-X is an extension to the fire test methods because it requires a skilled interpretation of the test results to determine the classification.

This interpretation requires a detailed understanding of the tests and all the parameters that are measured by them.

Consequently, accreditation bodies shall provide accreditation of laboratories to ISO/IEC 17025 for undertaking classifications to EN 13501-X.”

Both EA and ILAC shall be informed of the implementation of this technical recommendation by EGOLF members and that EGOLF expects accreditation bodies to note and accept this document when accrediting member laboratories.

EGOLF TC4 further recommends that this document shall be considered:

- By CEN TC127 for amendment of Annex B of the classification standards (to meet the EGOLF view)

NOTE: EXTRACT FROM GNB-FSG (SH02) RECOMMENDATION 002

The FSG considers that:

- 1) *Only Notified Bodies should carry out extended application from reaction to fire and fire resistance tests.*
- 2) *Noting that one Notified Body is finally responsible for attesting the fire performance of a product, only a Notified Body involved in the testing can issue a classification report, and:*
 - *if one laboratory is involved in carrying out the fire test(s), that laboratory shall issue the classification report*

if more than one laboratory is involved in carrying out the fire tests, one of these laboratories shall prepare the classification report. In doing this, the laboratory shall consult with the other laboratories to ensure that their test reports have been interpreted correctly.