



GUIDE TO UNDERTAKING ASSESSMENTS IN LIEU OF FIRE TESTS

The Passive Fire Protection Federation (PFPF)

PFPF represents the passive fire protection industry within the UK and provides both a focal point and forum for developing and advancing best practice in the critical area of passive fire protection. As a single industry contact point on all passive fire protection matters it avoids the need for multiple consultation on fire safety issues.

The Federation aims to promote the interests of the industry by providing solutions within the context of cost effective fire safety design; and ensuring the reliability and quality of passive fire protection materials and systems are maintained. It encourages the safe use of passive fire protection through third party certification and accreditation schemes for the manufacture and installation of products and systems.

Association House, 235 Ash Road, Aldershot, Hampshire GU12 4DD

T 01252 321322

F 01252 333901

E info@associationhouse.org.uk

W www.associationhouse.org.uk

RELATIONSHIP WITH STATUTORY PROVISIONS

Much of the guidance that supports fire safety legislation is given in terms of performance in relation to British or European Standards for products or methods of test or design or in terms of European Technical Approvals. Typically therefore a material, product or structure should:

- a be in accordance with a specification or design which has been shown by **test** to be capable of meeting that performance; or
- b have been **assessed** from test evidence against appropriate standards, or by using relevant design guides, as meeting that performance.

Assessments that are not undertaken in accordance with this guide may still be acceptable for regulatory purposes. However, following the guidance contained within it will provide confidence that assessments have been carried out with the necessary care and expertise and are appropriate for the intended use.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the document is to give confidence to end-users that assessments that exist in the UK market produced by organisations that subscribe to this document are of a satisfactory standard to be used in lieu of fire tests for building control and other purposes. Subscribing organisations are required to satisfy the corporate requirements of this document i.e. to employ individuals that subscribe to professional principles and to have a nationally recognised quality system accredited to EN ISO 9000 or EN 45000.

The document includes and extends upon the principles and procedures embodied in FTSG Resolution 64a: 1993 and its predecessor Resolution 64. These resolutions which have been widely circulated to regulatory authorities, consultants and manufacturers for many years are superseded by this guide.

The guide also defines the levels of complexity for different kinds of assessment, the levels of expertise for assessors & reviewers and controls the levels of assessor & reviewer who are permitted to undertake/review each kind of assessment. The procedure for undertaking assessments is included, carried over from FTSG resolution 64a:1993. Finally, it includes a code of conduct for assessors & reviewers.

This document has been produced by the UK Fire Test Study Group (FTSG) an association of the major fire testing laboratories in the UK and is published by the Passive Fire Protection Federation (PFPF) the representative body for the passive fire protection industry in the UK. The document has been endorsed through the membership of the Industry Enforcement Authority Liaison Group (IEALG) which includes:

- Home Office (HO)
- Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR)
- Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers Association (CACFOA)
- Passive Fire Protection Federation (PFPF)
- Construction Products Association (CPA)
- Loss Prevention Certification Board (LPCB)
- Institute of Trading Standards Administration (ITSA)
- Institute of Building Control (IBC)
- Warrington Fire Research Certification (incorporating Certifire and FIRAS)
- FTSG

2. SCOPE

This document relates to the production of assessments which are offered in the absence of specific fire resistance test results. Some areas where assessments may be offered are:

- Where a modification is made to a construction which has already been tested
- Interpolation or extrapolation of results of a series of fire resistance tests, or utilisation of a series of fire test results to evaluate a range of variables in a construction design or a product
- Where, for various reasons (e.g. size or configuration) it is not possible to subject a construction or a product to a fire test.

Assessments will vary from relatively simple judgements on small changes to a product or construction through to detailed and often complex engineering assessments of large or sophisticated constructions.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 Assessment

An opinion of the likely performance of a component or element of structure if it were to be subjected to a standard fire test.

Note: In the majority of cases covered by this document an assessment is the evaluation of a product in lieu of a fire resistance test that could be carried out in a standard size furnace e.g. 3m x 3m for wall furnaces. Examples of such assessments are: assessing modest size increases in doors, changes in fixing centres etc. For the product to be given this type of assessment no

significant redesign or reengineering needs to be undertaken. This type of assessment is not limited by furnace design - size increases beyond standard furnace sizes can be included provided there is a valid technical argument given. However, large size increases are the subject of engineering appraisals.

3.2 Engineering appraisal

A technical evaluation of the likely performance of an element of structure if it could be subjected to a standard fire test.

Note: This second level would be for large constructions e.g. very high/wide glazed screens, high composite stud and plasterboard walls. These constructions require significant reengineering of the product compared to what was tested - often for cold state application. These require a different kind of assessment to be undertaken, one that cannot rely on judgement/opinion but which needs an engineering input. The fire model used in engineering appraisals is still the standard temperature/time curve. This document limits this kind of appraisal to more senior assessors

3.3 Report

The written report of an assessment or engineering appraisal.

3.4 Fire test

A test performed to evaluate the performance of a material, product, assembly or element of structure

3.5 Applicant

The person or body requesting an assessment.

3.6 Assessor

The person employed by the subscribing organisation making the assessment or engineering appraisal in response to a request from the applicant.

3.7 Reviewer

The person employed by the subscribing organisation responsible for checking and confirming the validity of an assessment or engineering appraisal on behalf of the body making the assessment.

3.8 Relevant experience

Experience of fire tests and of undertaking assessments (as assessor or reviewer) in the relevant product groups.

3.10 Subscribing organisations

Organisations that agree to be bound by this guide.

4. REQUIREMENTS OF SUBSCRIBING ORGANISATIONS

The corporate requirements of any subscribing organisation undertaking assessments are as follows:

4.1 Professional indemnity cover

The organisation shall hold adequate professional indemnity insurance that covers all of its activities relating to the issuing of assessments.

4.2 Quality management requirements

The organisation shall maintain a quality management system that includes the issuing of assessments and engineering appraisals. The quality manual shall contain a commitment to comply with all the requirements of this document.

The quality management system shall require that the organisation maintains a register(s) of individuals' competencies, qualifications, responsibilities and details of their Continuing Professional Development.

4.3 Maintenance of assessor & reviewer matrices

The competence, professional experience and CPD of each assessor and reviewer will be the responsibility of the subscribing organisation who will review and maintain the competency matrix and the CPD record for each assessor/reviewer. These documents shall be open to public scrutiny.

The organisation shall modify the competency matrices for their assessors/reviewers if:

- Assessors/reviewers are withdrawn from assessing particular forms of construction
- Assessors/reviewers are withdrawn from undertaking assessments of a particular level
- Assessors/reviewers leave the organisation.

4.4 Responsibility for choosing assessors & reviewers

Selection of the assessor/reviewer shall be made by a named individual in each organisation. Provision shall be made for a deputy during periods of absence.

5. REQUIREMENTS OF INDIVIDUALS

5.1 Competencies

For each assessor and reviewer employed by the organisation, a record shall be kept of their competency to assess different forms of construction. This record shall be in the form of the matrix given in Annex A. The record shall be reviewed annually by the subscribing organisation.

5.2 Qualifications

For each assessor and reviewer employed by the subscribing organisation a record shall be kept of any qualifications they may have that are relevant to their ability to undertake assessments.

5.3 Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

For each assessor and reviewer employed by the organisation a record shall be kept of their continuing professional development. An example of the ways in which individuals can maintain and increase their professional status could be by the accrual of CPD 'points'. Such points could be earned by for example:

- Membership of professional bodies
- Conducting/watching the relevant fire tests.
- Reading appropriate trade/scientific journals
- Contribution to national and international standardisation
- Attending/giving papers at seminars/conferences in appropriate fire related areas
- Presenting papers/workshops in areas of expertise on a regular basis

5.4 Conduct

Assessors, reviewers and their employing organisations are required to abide by the Code and Rules of Conduct in Annex C.

6. REQUIREMENTS OF ASSESSORS & REVIEWERS

Different levels of assessor and reviewer have been identified with different levels of responsibility as follows:

6.1 Level 4 - Trainee assessor (demonstrates 'awareness')

- **Either** > 2 years relevant testing experience (non - graduate)
Or > 1 year relevant testing experience plus qualifications equivalent to graduate/associate engineer/NVQ level 5 or above
- No sole responsibility - works only under supervision
- Can undertake 'simple assessments'

6.2 Level 3 - Assessor (demonstrates 'experience')

- **Either** > 4 years relevant experience (non - graduate)
Or > 2 years relevant experience plus qualifications equivalent to Technician engineer or above
- No supervision required - but unable to review assessments
- Can undertake 'intermediate complexity assessments'

6.3 Level 2 - Senior assessor/reviewer (is an 'expert')

- **Either** > 6 years relevant experience (non-graduate)
Or > 3 years relevant experience plus qualifications equivalent to Incorporated engineer or above

- As level 3 plus greater depth/experience of different products
- Able to supervise
- Able to review
- Can undertake 'complex assessments'

6.4 Level 1 - Principle assessor/reviewer (is a 'professional')

- Chartered engineer or equivalent
- Three years relevant experience
- Able to supervise
- Able to review
- Able to undertake engineering appraisals

7. LEVELS OF COMPLEXITY OF ASSESSMENT

Different levels of complexity of assessment have been identified as follows:

7.1 Simple assessments

The assessment of relatively minor changes to a tested product or construction. Such changes shall not be critical to the fire performance of the product or construction being assessed. Examples of simple assessments are:

- Substitution of cover trims of jointing systems in partitions
- Substitution of non-critical items of ironmongery to fire doors
- Minor changes to the fixing centres of a partition or external wall

Simple assessments can be undertaken by assessors of Level 4 or above, but must be reviewed by assessors/reviewers of level 2 or above.

7.2 Intermediate complexity assessments

The assessment of intermediate complexity and significant changes to a tested product or construction. Such changes may be critical to the fire performance of the product or construction being assessed. Examples of intermediate complexity assessments are:

- Changes to major components e.g. facing materials, framing studs in a partition system
- Substitution of critical items of ironmongery and/or intumescent strips in fire doors
- Addition of components such as overpanels/side panels in fire doors
- Assessment of simple changes to fire protection of steel work
- Simple change of facing material to a wall or ceiling lining (example only)

Simple assessments can be undertaken by assessors of Level 3 or above, but must be reviewed by assessors/reviewers of level 2 or above.

7.3 Complex assessments

The assessment of complex and significant multiple changes to a group of tested products or constructions. Such assessments often rationalise the results of several tests in a 'Global' assessment to cover ranges of products in different combinations and permutations. Such changes are always fundamental to the fire performance of the product or construction being assessed. Examples of complex assessments are:

- Interpolation/extrapolation of a range of tests on fire doors or glazing to cover a large range of sizes
- Interpolation/extrapolation of a range of tests on fire doors to cover different configurations (single/double doors, single/double action, overpanels, side panels unequal pairs etc.)
- Interpolation/extrapolation of a range of tests on glazing to be able to assess modifications to the glazing system (framing components, seal details) to be able to include different types of fire resisting glass.
- Analysis of a range of tests on fire protection of structural steel work to determine the level of fire protection required for a wide variety of shapes, sizes and types of steel section (yellow book analysis).

- Interpolation/extrapolation of a range of test data to cover the reaction to fire performance of different thickness' of a product

Simple assessments can be undertaken by assessors of Level 2 or above, and must be reviewed by assessors/reviewers of level 2 or above.

7.4 Engineering appraisals

The technical evaluation of the likely performance of an element of structure if it could be subjected to a standard fire test. These constructions often require significant reengineering of the product compared to what was tested - often for cold state application. These require a different kind of assessment to be undertaken, one that cannot rely on judgement/opinion but which needs a significant engineering input. The fire model used in engineering appraisals is still the standard temperature/time curve. Examples of engineering appraisals are:

- large constructions e.g. very high/wide glazed screens, composite high stud and plasterboard walls
- Types of construction e.g. large curtain walls that cannot be tested due to the limitations of current fire testing equipment
- The performance of steel framed buildings
- The performance of large ducting systems

Engineering appraisals can only be undertaken by assessors of Level 1 or above, and must also be reviewed by assessors/reviewers of level 1 or someone who is nominated to accept corporate responsibility.

8. PROCEDURE FOR UNDERTAKING ASSESSMENTS

Note for this section, the use of the term 'assessment' includes assessments and engineering appraisals.

8.1 Application for assessment

All requests for assessment shall be confirmed in writing by letter, telex, fax or e-mail.

The request for assessment shall give reference to a detailed specification of the proposed construction (e.g. reference to drawing numbers) and shall make available to the assessor all information relevant to the assessment of which the applicant is aware e.g. any test data including test failures.

The applicant shall declare whether he has approached any other organisation or individual for an assessment of the same or similar construction; he shall also disclose whether the construction has been tested and disclose any evidence or information, whether favourable or otherwise, which may be relevant to the assessment. (See 8.5 assessment report).

8.2 Selection of assessor/reviewer

The assessment shall be performed by an assessor of the appropriate level and product/construction expertise from the competency matrix of the subscribing organisation. The selection of assessor shall be made according to the complexity of the assessment being undertaken and the type of product/construction being assessed.

The assessment shall be subject to a comprehensive check of the technical data, the reasoning and the derived opinion by a reviewer also of the appropriate level and product/construction expertise from the competency matrix of the subscribing organisation.

Both the assessor and the reviewer should, therefore, have an intimate knowledge of the current relevant testing procedures and their interpretations, together with a thorough understanding of the type of construction to be assessed.

Selection of the assessor/reviewer shall be made by a named individual in each organisation. Provision shall be made for a deputy during periods of absence.

8.3 Impartiality

Both the assessor and the reviewer shall act with complete impartiality in their judgement. Where the assessor or reviewer has been involved in the design or development of the product or construction this shall be made clear. Any involvement with or attachment to a manufacturer or an industry sector relevant to the product or construction subject to the consideration shall either be stated or implicit in the assessment report.

8.4. Supporting Information

Any proprietary information referenced in formulating the assessment shall be provided entirely by the applicant.

All the proprietary information must be the property of the applicant or alternatively, the applicant must provide written authority from the owner of the information for it to be used.

Where information is provided which is not the original property of the applicant, or where the test report(s) provided are not from the assessing laboratory, the assessor shall be given written authority from the applicant to approach directly both the owner of the information and the test laboratory(ies) that conducted the test(s).

Where an assessment has been provided or declined by another organisation or individual, the assessor shall be given written authority from the applicant to approach directly the body which provided or declined the assessment.

Referenced information may be divided into two types, i.e. primary and secondary. Primary information is test data obtained from one or more fire tests and is essential to formulation of the assessment. Secondary information is that which may be used to provide supplementary data or to fill in gaps in knowledge.

The following sources for primary data (which must be test reports) and secondary data shall be used:

Primary data

Primary data must satisfy all of the following requirements:

- Primary data must come from a laboratory accredited to EN 45001 for the appropriate test
- or**
- Primary data may come from an official or nationally approved laboratory but shall be witnessed* by the assessing organisation

additionally

- Primary data greater than 5 years old must be subject to the review of test reports procedure given in Annex D

and

- Primary data must be a full test to the standard against which the assessment is being based

Secondary data

Secondary data should satisfy the following requirements:

- Secondary data may be other test reports
- Secondary data may be data published in codes and standards

* Witnessing means more than turning up at the laboratory on the day of the test. Ideally, it means being involved with the client in the design of the test specimen and inspecting/auditing the laboratory's facilities/records.

Test information which is relevant to the assessment should be reviewed against current test procedures to ensure that the results are still valid.

Test information from overseas laboratories may be used in formulating the assessment provided that one of the following rules apply:

- The report has been translated into English, and validated by the original laboratory as being a true translation.
- An unvalidated translation into English may be submitted provided it is submitted together with the original full test report in the foreign language.

Assessments shall not be based on other assessments. However, reference may be made to publicly available standard information (e.g. that contained in Codes of Practice).

8.5 The assessment report

A statement shall be included in the assessment stating that it has been carried out in accordance with this guide.

For organisations accredited by UKAS (e.g. laboratories that are members of FTSG) where the report bears the UKAS logo, the following statement shall be included in order to comply with UKAS requirements:

"The opinions and interpretations expressed in this assessment are outside the scope of UKAS accreditation".

The assessment shall contain details of the applicant and the request for making the assessment.

All the information used in formulating the assessment shall be referenced in detail, including relevant correspondence from the applicant, drawings and specifications which may have been provided, test reports considered and any calculation methods which may be adopted.

The considerations of the assessor should be adequately documented such that the user can understand the basis and technical justification of the opinion formulated.

The opinion formulated as a result of the considerations, i.e. the opinion offered, must be detailed clearly and unambiguously in the same terms as required by the appropriate regulating authority stating the test standard against which the assessment has been carried out.

The version of the test standard to which the assessment has been given shall be referenced in the assessment report.

The assessment report shall bear the following statement:

"This assessment is issued on the basis of test data and information to hand at the time of issue. If contradictory evidence becomes available to the assessing authority the assessment will be unconditionally withdrawn and the applicant will be notified in writing. Similarly the assessment is invalidated if the assessed construction is subsequently tested since actual test data is deemed to take precedence over an expressed opinion. The assessment is valid initially for a period of five years after which time it is recommended that it be submitted to the assessing authority for re-appraisal".

The assessment report shall include the declaration duly signed by the applicant.

The signature page of the assessment report shall bear the following statement:

"This assessment report is not valid unless it incorporates by the declaration duly signed by the applicant".

The form of the declaration is given in Annex B

The assessor and the reviewer shall both sign the assessment report.

8.6 Review of the assessment

If requested by the applicant the assessor may review the assessment with a view to extending its validity for another period of another five years. The purpose of the review is to ensure that current opinion, the basis of the assessment, the reference data, etc., are consistent with current methodology. Any review of an assessment shall be conducted in accordance with this procedure.

Annex A

EXAMPLE OF REGISTER OF ASSESSORS & REVIEWERS

Each organisation shall keep a register of the competency of the ability of their staff to undertake assessments on different constructions in the following format:

Competency matrix for subscribing member XXXX showing highest level of assessment that each individual can undertake

NAME	AA	BB	CC	DD
Non-loadbearing vertical elements				
Masonry walls	complex	complex	intermediate complexity	complex
Sheet/stud partitions	complex	complex	intermediate complexity	complex
Monobloc partitions	complex	complex	intermediate complexity	complex
Glazing	complex	complex	intermediate complexity	simple
Cavity barriers	complex	complex	intermediate complexity	simple
Non-loadbearing horizontal elements				
Suspended ceilings	complex	intermediate complexity	----	intermediate complexity
Horizontal partitions	complex	intermediate complexity	----	intermediate complexity
Load-bearing vertical elements				
Masonry walls	complex	intermediate complexity	----	complex
Steel framed walls	complex	intermediate complexity	complex	complex
Load-bearing horizontal elements				
Floors	simple	intermediate complexity	simple	complex
Roofs	----	intermediate complexity	----	complex
Beams/columns	----	----	----	
Steel	----	complex	----	simple
Timber	----	complex	----	simple
Concrete	----	complex	----	simple
Composite	----	complex	----	simple
Service installations				
Ducts	----	complex	----	simple
Dampers	----	complex	----	simple
Penetration	simple	complex	intermediate complexity	simple
Linear gap seals	simple	complex	intermediate complexity	simple
Doors - smoke and fire resisting				
Timber - flush/joinery	complex	engineering appraisal	intermediate complexity	intermediate complexity
Steel	complex	engineering appraisal	intermediate complexity	intermediate complexity
Sliding/folding	complex	engineering appraisal	intermediate complexity	intermediate complexity
Rolling shutter	simple	engineering appraisal	intermediate complexity	intermediate complexity
Safes/cabinets	----	complex	Simple	simple
Marine/offshore	Simple	engineering appraisal	intermediate complexity	intermediate complexity
Other transport	Simple	simple	Simple	simple
Electrical	----	simple	----	simple

**Annex B
DECLARATION BY THE APPLICANT**

Assessment Reference No _____

We the undersigned confirm that we have read and complied with the obligations placed on us by this guide on undertaking assessments

We confirm that the component or element of structure, which is the subject of this assessment, has not to our knowledge been subjected to a fire test to the standard against which this assessment is being made.

We agree to withdraw this assessment from circulation should the component or element of structure be the subject of a fire test to the standard against which this assessment is being made.

We are not aware of any information that could affect the conclusions of this assessment.

If we subsequently become aware of any such information we agree to ask the assessing authority to withdraw the assessment.

Signed: _____

For and on behalf of _____

* delete as applicable

Annex C

CODE AND RULES OF CONDUCT FOR ASSESSORS AND REVIEWERS

1. INTRODUCTION

Organisations that perform assessments will usually subscribe to a philosophy or have objectives that relate to increasing its professionalism. Its standing will be enhanced, if it employs staff to conduct and review assessments that are not only well qualified, but also have a professional commitment to excellence in their work and in their dealings with other people.

The Code of Conduct is designed to embody broad ethical principles is necessarily drawn up in general terms.

The Rules of Conduct define the behaviour of subscribing members' employees conducting and reviewing assessments in general situations. However, for exceptions to this, the principle to be followed is that the interests of the wider community should prevail over those of the individual employee or member.

2. CODE OF CONDUCT

Every assessor and reviewer employed by a subscribing Organisation shall conduct themselves at all time so as to uphold the dignity and reputation of their profession and to safeguard the general public. They shall exercise their professional skill and judgement to the best of their ability and discharge their professional responsibilities with integrity.

3. RULES OF CONDUCT

3.1 Professional Competence and Integrity

- Every assessor and reviewer employed by a subscribing Organisation has the responsibility to upgrade their professional skill. They shall maintain an adequate awareness of current technical developments, standards, procedures and regulations and shall encourage their subordinates to do likewise
- Any assessor or reviewer employed by a subscribing Organisation shall not knowingly act for a client for whom an assessor or reviewer employed by a different subscribing Organisation is acting in the same matter until either the first contract has been terminated by the client or the other subscribing Organisation has consented to his acting
- Any assessor or reviewer employed by a subscribing Organisation shall not maliciously or recklessly injure or attempt to injure, whether directly or indirectly, the professional reputation of another.

3.2 Public Interest

- Any assessor or reviewer employed by a subscribing Organisation shall not do anything, or permit under their authority to be done, of which the probable and involuntary consequences would, in their professional judgement, endanger human life or safety, expose valuable property to risk of destruction or serious damage, or needlessly pollute the environment, except when legally authorised to do so.
- Every assessor and reviewer employed by a subscribing Organisation shall respect all relevant laws and statutory regulations in their work.

3.3 Duty of employers to subscribing organisations

When discharging their professional duties every assessor and reviewer employed by a subscribing Organisation shall:

- satisfy themselves as to their scope, obtaining in advance if necessary any clarification or confirmation, and shall not accept assessments or reviews which they believe they do not have sufficient competence, authority or experience to perform;
- accept all responsibility for all work carried out by themselves, or under their supervision or direction, and shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that all persons working under their authority are competent to carry out the tasks allotted to them and that they accept responsibility for work done under the authority delegated to them;
- disclose to their client or employing subscribing organisation any benefits or interests that they may have in any matter in which they are engaged;
- neither communicate to any person, nor publish any information or matter not previously known by him or published in the public domain, which has been communicated to him in confidence by a client or employer without the express authority of that client or employer;
- not offer or give or receive inducement (financial or otherwise) to or from a third party in return for the introduction of clients or professional assignments without making such actions known to the client.

Annex D

PROCEDURE FOR REVIEW OF TEST REPORTS GREATER THAN 5 YEARS OLD

1. Introduction

This procedure is automatically invoked when test evidence that is greater than five years old is submitted as primary data in the consideration of an assessment. There is no need for an applicant to apply, it is a mandatory task that the assessor undertaking the assessment must carry out in order to be able to use the data supplied for assessment purposes.

For secondary data, there is no requirement to follow this procedure.

2. Procedure

2.1 Selection of reviewing personnel

The assessor and reviewer for the review of the test data should be the same assessor and reviewer undertaking the assessment. If this is not possible, then the assessor and reviewer shall satisfy the following requirements:

Both the assessor and the reviewer should have an intimate knowledge of the current relevant testing procedures and their interpretations, together with a thorough understanding of the type of construction which is the subject of the report.

Selection of the assessor/reviewer shall be made by a named individual in each organisation. Provision shall be made for a deputy during periods of absence.

2.3 Impartiality

Both the assessor and the reviewer shall act with complete impartiality in their judgement. Where the assessor or reviewer has been involved in the design or development of the product or construction this shall be made clear. Any involvement with or attachment to a manufacturer or an industry sector relevant to the product or construction subject to the consideration shall either be stated or implicit in the review report.

2.2 Ownership of test evidence

The assessor shall satisfy himself that where information is provided which is not the original property of the applicant of the assessment, that the applicant has right of access to that information. In this case the assessor shall be given written authority from the applicant to approach directly both the owner of the information and/or the test laboratory that conducted the test.

2.3 Originality of test evidence

Many old test reports submitted for consideration in assessments are often poor photocopies of the original documents. Sometime they are illegible and/or incomplete. In reviewing the evidence submitted, the assessor must satisfy himself that the evidence is original and has not been altered in any way. To ensure this he shall be given written authority from the applicant to approach directly both the owner of the information and/or the test laboratory that conducted the test.

2.4 Characterisation of material/product

Many old test reports contain descriptions of the tested product that may vary from that being considered under the assessment. Alternatively, it may be difficult to be fully confident that the material/construction tested originally is the same as that being subject to assessment. There may be a number of reasons for this, but excluding variation in material/product being the subject of the assessment, the following are causes of this:

- The material/product may be described differently in the test report
- The material/product may be described inadequately in the test report
- The material/product subject to assessment may be different to that described in the test report due to changes in raw materials, suppliers, fabrication methods etc

The reviewer must be confident that the evidence submitted is relevant to the product/material that is the subject of the assessment.

2.5 Review against current methodology

Test information which is relevant to the assessment shall be reviewed against current test procedures to ensure that the results are still valid. Changes in procedures that may have a bearing on the result of the test and consequently whether that evidence can be used in the assessment result from:

- Amendments to a particular test method
- Withdrawal of a particular test method
- FTSG resolution on a particular test method
- Amendment to end-use regulations that disallow a particular test method

The assessor must be confident that the product referenced in the test reports would, if tested, satisfy the current requirements of test method, FTSG resolution and end-use regulation.

2.6 The review report

A statement shall be included in the review report stating that it has been carried out in accordance with this guide.

For organisations accredited by UKAS (e.g. laboratories that are members of FTSG) where the report bears the UKAS logo, the following statement shall be included in order to comply with UKAS requirements:

"The opinions and interpretations expressed in this review are outside the scope of UKAS accreditation".

The review report shall contain details of the reports submitted in support of it and the need for them to be reviewed.

The considerations of the reviewer should be adequately documented such that the user can understand the basis and technical justification of the opinion formulated.

The review report shall bear the following statement:

"This review is issued on the basis of test data and information to hand at the time of issue. If contradictory evidence becomes available to the reviewing authority the review will be unconditionally withdrawn and the applicant will be notified in writing. Similarly the review is invalidated if the assessed construction is subsequently tested since new test data is deemed to take precedence over old test data and/or an expressed opinion. The review is valid initially for a period of five years after which time it is recommended that it be submitted to the reviewing authority for re-appraisal".

The review report shall include the declaration duly signed by the applicant.

The signature page of the review report shall bear the following statement:

"This review report is not valid unless it incorporates by the declaration duly signed by the applicant".

The form of the declaration is given below

The assessor and the reviewer shall both sign the review report.

2.7 Further review of the review report

If requested by the applicant, the assessor may review the review with a view to extending its validity for a period of another five years. Any review of an assessment shall also be conducted in accordance with this procedure.

2.8 Declaration by the applicant

Review Reference No _____

We the undersigned confirm that we have read and complied with the obligations placed on us by this procedure on undertaking reviews.

We confirm that the material, component or element of structure, which is the subject of the test report being reviewed, has not to our knowledge been subjected to another fire test to the standard against which the review is being made.

We agree to withdraw this review from circulation should the component or element of structure be the subject of another fire test to the standard against which the review is being made.

We are not aware of any information that could affect the conclusions of this review.

If we subsequently become aware of any such information we agree to ask the reviewing authority to withdraw the review.

Signed: _____

For and on behalf of _____

* delete as applicable