

## CEN-CENSE conference, September 25, 2009, Paris

### Recasting the EPBD. Current developments and the way forward to achieve an increased use of EPBD Standards

*A full report of this conference is in preparation (publication expected before end of October 2009).*

*These conclusions and recommendations will be incorporated in that report.*

#### Conclusions and recommendations

- What remains to be done to realise the full potential of the standards?
- How to combine efforts to bring the standards to application?

These two questions were addressed by Dick van Dijk (TNO) and Johann Zirngibl (CSTB) in their presentation<sup>1</sup> of conclusions and recommendations of the conference:

The conference proved that there is a wide interest by many target groups in Europe. Participants from 12 countries, representing the European Commission, the European Environmental Citizens' Organisation for Standardisation, the European Industry (Thermal insulation, heating, ventilation, lighting), Building professionals (REHVA, software developers), Universities and research institutes, attended the conference.

The main conclusions are the followings:

- There is a strong interest in a second generation of EPBD - CEN standards to assess the energy performance of buildings. Based on the experience of the first generation, a second generation is needed to facilitate the implementation in the EU Member States, to disseminate the European experience as a support to the European Industry and to enhance harmonization at global level (bring CEN standards to ISO).
- There is a need of positive signals towards a European common methodology.

#### Second generation of EPBD - CEN standards

The first generation of CEN standards to support the EPBD were published in the years 2007-2008 and were implemented in many EU Member States "in a practical way", mixed with national procedures, boundary conditions and input data.

The CENSE project is preparing recommendations to CEN to develop a second generation of standards in the coming years. Main recommendations under preparation and discussion are:

- A more uniform structure for each of the standards in the package.
  - With a distinction between common procedures and options to be chosen at national level; this will bring more clarity in the adoption of the procedures and the specific choices per country;
  - Fully spelled out equations and unambiguous links between input and output, making the standards ready-to-use for validation and software preparation;
- Use of the available common set of terms, definitions and symbols & subscripts, the latter also for all versions and national application documents in other languages.
- Reduction and clarification of the number of options given in the standards.

Final versions of these recommendations (including recommendations of specific technical nature and identification of gaps) will be reported before the end of the CENSE project (March 31, 2010). The revision of the standards and a corresponding revision of national methods and regulations will within the next five years enable the EU Member States to make a more direct use of the harmonized CEN procedures.

There is also a strong interest in ISO in the subject, which culminated in the recent establishment of a Joint Working Group in ISO to develop ISO (EN ISO) standards on energy

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<sup>1</sup> Oral presentation, no PowerPoint

performance of buildings, using the EPBD - CEN standards as a basis. This creates a unique opportunity for Europe to keep the lead on energy performance standards in a combined CEN-ISO effort.

A positive signal at the conference came from the Commission representative. There is a growing chance for a second mandate to CEN related to the EPBD. In this context, DG TREN has high expectations for the outcome from the CENSE project.

### **The need of positive signals towards a European common methodology**

Several presentations underlined the benefits of a Europe wide unified framework (knowledge share, avoid of duplications of efforts, fair competition, more transparency and better chances for innovation).

The first EPBD – CEN package has in general already a good quality compared to national methods. The quality and usability would be increased by the second generation.

But how to get the Member States to make the switch from their national method, in which also a lot of effort has been invested (e.g. training of the professionals) to the European method, especially on a short notice?

To bring the EPBD – CEN package to application there are several options:

- Wait until the national methods are voluntarily replaced by the European methods;
- Make the application of the EPBD – CEN package mandatory;
- Give the market forces the possibility to do it.

The first option will probably take a lot of time, because the driving forces are national, with a stronger national interest than a European one.

The second option is strongly supported by target groups working on the European level, because the national methods raise new barriers for the free circulation of products and services in Europe. The majority of the conference participants were also in favour of this option. But for several reasons, very clearly explained in the presentation of the Commission representative, there are hesitations to enforce a 100% mandatory application.

The third option, using the market forces, could lead to a soft convergence of national and the European method. In this option, a methodology, based on the EPBD - CEN package, should be admitted in parallel to the national method, to fulfil the national building codes requirements. The justification would be that national monopolistic positions for methodologies and software are not compatible with the objective of a European market. At the same time it would stimulate countries to write National Annexes or National Application Documents if and where they fear that the parallel routes would lead to different results.

In some Member States the use of the EPBD – CEN package as an option to fulfil the national building codes requirements is already authorised.

A contribution to the perspective of EU-wide application of the EPBD-CEN standards, was the announcement by the Commission representative that the common method for the comparative cost-optimum calculations, an important element in the EPBD recast proposal, shall (according to the Commission proposal) be based on the CEN standards. It will be very constructive to benchmark the national methods by the unified European methodology, to analyse the differences and to update the methods by the best practice. The CENSE partners are looking forward to discuss with DG TREN how to avoid that the development of the common method for cost-optimum calculations and the preparation of the second generation of CEN standards will diverge and miss the opportunity of synergy, In this respect we should learn from the lack of compatibility in the procedures developed under the EuPD with the EPBD - CEN package.

## **IEE-CENSE**

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in the EU Member States***

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