



## **EAPFP calls for increased CE marking for passive fire protection products**

The European Association for Passive Fire Protection (EAPFP) is leading a campaign to increase the number of passive fire protection products that are subject to mandatory CE marking on the European market.

The Association has been calling for voluntary European Technical Approval Guidelines (ETAGs) for a range of passive fire protection products to be converted to mandatory harmonised European product standards (hENs). Under the Construction Products Regulation, any product for which a hEN exists will be required to carry a CE Mark from 1 July 2013.

At a meeting on the 16 January, the EAPFP obtained general agreement from several European organisations for the drafting of a number of mandates for hENs. Participating groups included CEPE (European Association for paints and varnishes and printing inks), CEN (European Committee for Standardization), EOTA (European Organisation for Technical Approvals), EAPFP and the European Commission.

Declaring that the move represented significant progress in the Association's campaign to raise the standard of fire safety in buildings across Europe, Niall Rowan of the EAPFP technical committee, declared:

"The EAPFP considers that mandatory CE marking for all PFP products is essential to ensure quality and consistency and to avoid market distortion.

"Currently, many PFP products are not subject to mandatory CE marking because the method for evaluating these products is a European Technical Approval Guideline (ETAG) and these are not mandatory.

"This leads to an uneven market where responsible manufacturers, who voluntarily choose to CE mark their products, with all the associated checks on quality, are competing against companies who have done nothing other than a few ad-hoc fire resistance tests. This leads to a chaotic market for such products and several EAPFP members are reporting difficulties in their markets as a result.

"In contrast, from 1 July 2013, wherever a harmonised European product standard (hEN) exists, it will be illegal to sell such products without them being CE marked."

The draft mandates will begin the process for the conversion of ETAGs to hENs for fire stopping and sealing products; reactive coatings for steel protection; and passive products (boards, spray, renders) for steel protection.



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This would greatly increase the number of passive products for which CE marking would be mandatory. There are currently hENs either prepared or being prepared for: fire resisting ducts and dampers, components of smoke control systems, suspended ceilings, fire resisting glass, door hardware, doorsets and many other PFP products.

While pleased at the growing recognition of a need for improvement, the EAPFP warns that the full conversion process could take up to two years. Once the European Commission has issued a mandate (or instruction) to CEN to draft a standard, it has to be agreed before work can start on a hEN, eventually leading to mandatory CE marking for the product concerned.

Each draft mandate will be presented to the next Standing Committee for Construction (SCC) in July where Member State representatives will decide on them before allowing them to go to the European Parliament for final approval.

For further information on the EAPFP, visit [www.eapfp.com](http://www.eapfp.com); tel: +44 (0)1420 471616; e-mail: [admin@eapfp.com](mailto:admin@eapfp.com)

**ENDS**

**519 words**

**Notes to Editors**

EAPFP was formed in 1988 to act as a European voice on behalf of national associations representing manufacturers, contractors and other institutions involved in the fire protection to steelwork, timber, and other passive fire protection applications, including penetration seals and ductwork.

Countries represented by EAPFP members include Austria; Belgium; Cyprus; Denmark; France; Germany; Ireland; Netherlands; Russia; Spain; and UK.

The Association campaigns to raise the standard of fire safety in buildings and offers a range of publications and guidance notes in several languages. The EAPFP also has representation on the European Union Technical Committees involved in developing product standards across Europe.

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