

Water Regulations Advisory Committee
9th July 2003
Room 6ab, Ashdown House

Those Present:

Members

Professor Swaffield (Chair)	WRAC
Richard Clayton	WRAC
Geoff Marsh	WRAC
Mike Rymill	WRAC
Terry Stephenson	WRAC
David Hodges	WRAC
David Gibson	WRAC

Observers

Mike Waite	Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI)
David Howarth	Environment Agency
Gareth Jones	WRAS/Wessex Water
Graham Mays	WRAS

Secretariat

Rob Mynard	Grant Gahagan	Patrick Brown
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Apologies

Steve Tuckwell	WRAS
Andrew Hutchinson	WRAC

1. Minutes from meeting of 22 May 2003

- a. The group agreed the minutes were a true reflection of the previous meeting. All action points have been completed. The Secretariat are currently consulting the Building Regulations Division of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister regarding the Gledhill boiler relaxation request.

2. Pressure flushing valves

- a. The Secretariat had received a request from WRAS to clarify the background of the Regulations regarding the use of pressure flushing valves in domestic urinals. The groups' view was that these were prohibited by the Regulations on the understanding that there would rarely be sufficient pressure in a domestic plumbing system for pressure flushing valves to operate correctly. Also a pipe interrupter is required in the UK, which can cause additional difficulties. The three main issues are:
 - Should pressure flushing valves be used in houses?
 - Is the restriction on minimum flow rate necessary?
 - Is a pipe interrupter an appropriate type of backflow protection?

This issue needed to be addressed as there is known to be confusion among manufacturers. In mainland Europe, domestic urinals were reported to be increasingly popular for water conservation reasons. It was agreed that the

Secretariat should reply to WRAS requesting a more detailed assessment of the situation, including a proposal for a relaxation if appropriate.

Action: Secretariat

3. Best Practice Manual

- a. The Water Industry was praised for its efforts in producing an excellent document. The group were keen for there to be a timescale for the document to be updated/modified. Gareth Jones responded that the intention was to let the first version of this document 'bed-in' for a time, with the first update getting underway in 12-18 months.

4. WRAC's final report

- a. The group was pleased with the report which had been submitted to the Minister of State. The importance of Government departments working together was raised by the Committee, especially with reference to the Building Regulations and Water Regulations. Notification and sector subgroups for Approved Contractor schemes were also noted as areas that will require further consideration. The next step is with Defra, who will need to consider and respond to the WRAC report. The Department would consider the need for changes to the Regulations. It did not wish the Regulations to restrict innovation or place an undue burden on installers of water fittings or on water companies in their enforcement capacity.

5. Comments from Defra

- a. The Secretariat thanked the committee for its work and commitment over several years. There were now a number of issues for the Department to consider and take forward, ideally in close liaison with WRAS.

6. Comments from the Chairman

- a. The Chairman gave the group a brief review of WRAC's achievements since 1996 and thanked all those presently on the Committee and remembered those that had served in the past. The Secretariat was also thanked for their excellent support.

WRAC Secretariat

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