

Water Regulations Advisory Committee Technical Working Group (TWG)

31st March 2003

Room 7a, 2nd Floor, Ashdown House

Those Present:

Members

Professor Swaffield (Chair)	WRAC
Richard Clayton	WRAC
Mike Rymill	WRAC
Andrew Hutchinson	WRAC
Roger Emmet	WRAC
Bernard Bateman	WRAC
Mike Johnson	ODPM/Building Regulations Division
David Calderbank	Environment Agency
Kevin English	Caroma UK
Ed Smith	Anglian Water/Water UK

Secretariat

Peter Jiggins Grant Gahagan

Apologies

David Gibson	WRAC
David Hodges	WRAC
Steve Tuckwell	Water Regulations Advisory Scheme (WRAS)

1. Introductions

- a. The Group exchanged brief introductions. Professor Swaffield reminded the Group that they attend WRAC meetings as individuals, not representatives of their employers, and this should be reflected in any contribution they make.

2. Matters arising from minutes of 22 November 2002

- a. The minutes were recognised as an accurate record of the previous meeting.

3. Relaxation requests – Dual flush/interruptible retrofits

- a. The Chairman gave the Group a brief overview, setting out the issues that required consideration. The Group was in agreement that these devices can save water, although the inevitably variable trailing volumes gave rise to concerns over blockages. The consensus view of the Committee was to advise the Minister to accept the relaxation for both types of device, subject to some conditions. The Group was content with the conditions proposed by WRAS, apart from the requirement for an in-situ paper discharge test for reduced flush volumes, as this was seen as unenforceable. The Committee was also keen to ensure that instructions provided with any devices should be user friendly, and that only cisterns installed pre-1 July 1999 could be retrofitted. This would prevent unsatisfactory performance if such a device was retrofitted in a cistern already of a low volume.

Action: Secretariat

- b. There was a consensus view that an ongoing study would be beneficial to establish how these devices performed in practice.

4. Clarification of Regulators' Specification – Paper discharge for reduced flush volume test

- a. The Chairman explained to the Group that when the Regulator's Specification was originally written, the intention was for this test to be undertaken with joined sheets. However, the specification was erroneously recorded as separate sheets and this mistake was not identified or corrected. If the Specification was changed to joined sheets, it is likely that the majority of dual flush WCs would be able to pass this test at 3 litres. These WCs could then be sold with a 3 litre flush volume, providing a saving of water over WCs with a 4 litres lower flush.

- b. The incoming European Standard for WC performance, which incorporates the Regulator's Specification, will stipulate separate sheets for this test. There were concerns that if the Specification were amended now it would conflict with the European Standard. It was noted that manufacturers have spent considerable amounts of money to produce WCs that meet the current test specification. Any change that would make the Specification easier to achieve would be seen as a backward step. A compromise was proposed to add a further condition to the current Specification so that a WC which passed the current specification could be sold and installed as a 6:3 litre WC if it also passed an additional test using joined sheets at 3 litres. The Group agreed to this in principle, the Secretariat would look into the possibility of relaxing the Specification to add this condition.

Action: Secretariat

5. ISO Standards (Paper IAF/ILAC JWG/12 (December 2002) see Annex 1)

- a. Recommendation 7 from the WRAC enforcement report established that different testing facilities should produce the same results. The Chairman invited comments from the Group on this and also whether there is a need for ISO 17025. A member raised his concerns that the introduction of ISO 17025 would put a considerable financial burden on small laboratories. In reply it was confirmed that product certification could be obtained by three potential routes; through a laboratory with ISO 17025, through WRAS verification, or through submission for testing at an accredited laboratory.

6. Conclusions of TWG

- a. The Group gave their views on the draft paper of the conclusions of the TWG. Suggested alterations were noted by the Secretariat and suitable changes would be made to the paper. This would be tabled, along with the conclusions of the other Working Groups, at the full WRAC meeting on 22 May.

Action: Secretariat

7. Relaxation request – unvented hot water storage heaters

- a. It was agreed that the documents supplied with the relaxation request did not provide the Group with enough detail to make a decision. There was some uncertainty over whether this appliance was allowed by Building Regulations, and what exactly the relaxation request was seeking. The Group would need to know, among other things, whether it was a primary or secondary heating vessel. There was normally a requirement for a temperature relief valve on this sort of installation. WRAC declined to make a recommendation on the relaxation until further details of the request could be clarified. Mike Johnson agreed to discuss the matter further with the Secretariat.

Action: Secretariat, Mike Johnson

Annex 1

<http://www.iso.ch/iso/en/comms-markets/conformity/pdf/iafilaccommunique.pdf>