January 2016

ICG - UK Intumescent Coatings Manufacturers & Certification Bodies

Summary of the proposed transitioning by industry towards EN 16623 compliance

The BCF Intumescent Coatings Group published a five-page comprehensive guidance document in September 2015 (reference IC 005), which sets out the intentions of the UK intumescent coatings industry to transition from existing practices and certification procedures towards the new European standard BS EN 16623:2015. This summary covers the key aspects for the industry (manufacturers and certification bodies) related to this transitioning process.

1. The intumescent coatings industry welcomes the intention to create a harmonised European Norm / Standard (hEN) for intumescents, meeting the objectives of the Construction Products Regulation and ultimately making CE marking mandatory for the industry across Europe.
2. This hEN is expected to be based around EN 16623, probably with a widening of scope, e.g. to substrates other than metallic substrates.
3. IC 005 was published as a means by which the UK intumescent coatings sector could highlight the differences between current practice and EN 16623 - each element from the standard was assessed in turn, establishing current practice and what steps need to be taken to bridge the gap between this and EN 16623.
4. There is general agreement that relevant organisations should take the opportunity to introduce the different outstanding elements from EN 16623 into their businesses over the coming 12-24 months, with the assistance of the certification bodies as they add test results etc. into the ‘additional information’ section on certificates.
5. This will ensure an easier introduction and acceptance of the hEN to the intumescent coatings sector, once it becomes available.
6. The elements that can be worked on immediately are:-
   5.1 Reaction to Fire – including information on testing and classification under EN 13501-1
   5.3 Durability – incorporation & acceptance of the new classification - see separate document
   6.4 Characterisation of the reactive coating – make this standard practice for all new products
   6.5 Factory Production Control – meet EN 16623 by adhering to 3rd Party certification policy
7. The main element that requires additional testing (including the use of increased loadings under EN 13381) is section 5.2 Resistance to Fire. As this will require a higher-technically specified, more costly product it is expected that this element will not be widely incorporated until a hEN is in place, and the requirement becomes mandatory.

This document has been prepared by the BCF’s Intumescent Coatings Group. All enquiries regarding the content, and requests for copies of IC005 Guidance document may be sent to the ICG secretary: – Trevor Fielding, Regulatory Affairs Manager at the BCF, trevor.fielding@bcf.co.uk