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English Version

Construction products - Assessment of release of dangerous substances - Barriers to trade

Produits de construction - Evaluation de l'émission de substances dangereuses - Barrières aux échanges

Bewertung der Freisetzung von gefährlichen Substanzen aus Bauprodukten - Handelsbarrieren

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Contents

Page

Foreword.....	3
1 Introduction and Background to the Technical Report	4
2 Implementation of this Work Item	5
2.1 Administrative Procedures and Objectives	5
2.1.1 Concepts and Scope of Barriers to Trade	5
2.1.2 Barriers to Trade or Barriers to Use	6
2.2 Questions to Consultees	7
3 Industry Groups	7
4 Status of the Industry Consultations and Interviews	8
5 Results of Surveys	8
5.1 Perceptions of Barriers to Trade	8
5.2 Barriers to Trade or Use	10
5.2.1 General	10
5.2.2 Current Regulations – two or more Member States	11
5.2.3 Current Regulations – single Member State	11
5.2.4 Barriers to Use	11
5.2.5 Summary and Definitions of Barriers	12
5.3 Examples of Barriers	12
5.3.1 General comments	12
5.3.2 Specific product Group Issues	14
6 How Standardisation can remove barriers to trade	19
7 Conclusions	20
7.1 Barriers to Trade	20
7.2 Barriers to Use	20
7.3 Limitations	20
8 Recommendations	20
Annex A (informative) Lists of Associations, contact details and product specifications	22

Foreword

This document (CEN/TR 15855:2009) has been prepared by Technical Committee CEN/TC 351 "Construction Products Assessment of release of dangerous substances", the secretariat of which is held by NEN.

This document has been prepared under a mandate given to CEN by the European Commission and the European Free Trade Association, and supports essential requirements of EU Directive(s).

This Technical Report is prepared by CEN/TC 351 "Construction products – Assessment of release of dangerous substances" and indicates the barriers to trade as identified by CEN product Technical Committees in relation with emission of regulated dangerous substances into indoor air, surface water, groundwater or soil. CEN was asked in Mandate M/366 to describe if and how these barriers to trade can be resolved or prevented by the set of standards included in the work programme.

This report looks first at existing technical barriers, but also examines whether potential technical barriers exist and provides examples of these barriers.

However the market sometimes makes little or no distinction between a technical barrier to trade (or even a potential barrier to trade) and the existence of barriers to the use of products that are legally placed on the market having already met the technical standard requirements. Manufacturers are disturbed that they can comply with the requirements of the CPD and any harmonised standards, but still encounter difficulties in having their products specified and used, or even where they have to complete additional hurdles beyond those required in the harmonised technical specification. As the subject came up many times, this report contains numerous references to such "barriers to use", but this subject will be dealt with separately in greater detail in another report since it is not within the scope of CEN Standardisation to remove barriers to use.

Similarly, there is no attempt in this report to examine the question of trade barriers resulting from any other market mechanisms introduced at either EU level or national level, which results in or from fiscal penalties, quotas or international trade agreements since these are beyond the scope of technical harmonisation.

This Technical Report is expected to be used by the Commission to address the issue of barriers to trade with Member States and to discuss with regulators their requirements to prevent harmful effects as stated in Essential Requirement 3 of the CPD as described in the main body of the mandate M/366.

1 Introduction and Background to the Technical Report

Mandate M/366 of the European Commission to CEN, titled: "DEVELOPMENT OF HORIZONTAL STANDARDISED ASSESSMENT METHODS FOR HARMONISED APPROACHES RELATING TO DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES UNDER THE CONSTRUCTION PRODUCTS DIRECTIVE (CPD), emission to indoor air, soil, surface water and ground water", which created CEN/TC 351, required a number of technical reports (TRs) to assist in the process of standardisation. The first of these TRs was to establish the extent of or presence of technical barriers to trade resulting from requirements under Essential Requirement 3 (ER3), as perceived or experienced by manufacturers of construction products, demanded by EU Member States.

Since the CPD (Council Directive 89/106/EEC of December 21, 1988 concerning construction products) is aiming to lift barriers to trade, there would be no point, in theory, in developing standards in CEN/TC 351 for the purpose of ER3 if no technical barriers to trade exist.

However, the "Grounds" for this Mandate, given by the Commission, state:

'... this standardisation mandate refers to products for which the two following conditions are fulfilled:

- a) the products are or risk to be subject to technical barriers to trade arising from regulated dangerous substances;
- b) the characteristics of the products regarding regulated dangerous substances influence the satisfaction by the construction works, in which they are to be incorporated in a permanent manner, of the essential requirements as laid down in article 3 of the CPD and set out in terms of objectives with regard to hygiene, health and the environment, in Annex 1 of the CPD. These works are subject to legislative, regulatory or administrative regulations of Member States covering such essential requirements specifically in the field of dangerous substances'.¹

Further, in Clause 7 of the "Execution of the Mandate" referring to the work programme of CEN, it states:

'It [the work programme] shall identify and cover all products or product families for which the three following conditions are fulfilled:

- European or national regulations are limiting or banning the emission or content (see IV.8) of dangerous substances;
- Existing or potential barriers to trade have been identified;
- Measurement/test methods for these specified regulated dangerous substances have already been developed and are used on a national or EU level.

Considering point (a) in the "Grounds" for the Mandate it is stated that products "*at risk*" from technical barriers to trade are equally important to existing barriers to trade, and also in the above Clause 7, Execution of the Mandate, the second dash refers to "*potential barriers*" as well as established barriers. This makes the scope of the work wider than simply identifying existing technical barriers.

The Mandate also specifically refers to 'technical' barriers to trade, and CEN is especially asked to consider in the Work Package the following TR:

"Work Package 1: technical reports: procedures for testing and testing schemes

1. Technical Report on examples of existing and potential barriers to trade in relation with emission of regulated dangerous substances into indoor air, surface water, ground water or soil.

¹ Any other type of barrier to trade falls within Articles 30/36 of the Treaty and must be directly eliminated by the Member States.