

The Strand Board

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SBA Annual Spring Meeting

The invitation and registration form for the upcoming SBA annual spring meeting in Vancouver, BC have been sent out and were uploaded on our web site at www.osbguide.com/events.html. Nine great speakers have been confirmed as well as the offsite dinner activities including a stroll over the famous Capilano Suspension Bridge and a gondola ride up Grouse Mountain nearby. Some OSB manufacturers that are not members of the SBA have been invited as guests and have indicated they will attend the meeting. For additional information you can click on the link above.

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Trade Show Update

In January and February, staff participated in two major construction shows, first BAU in Munich, Germany, followed by the International Builders' Show (IBS) in Orlando, Florida.

BAU is a biannual event attracting over 209,000 visitors and 2,046 exhibitors from 44 countries this year. It is the world's biggest trade fair for building materials. The SBA's booth was located in the Canadian pavilion. More than 1700 pieces of literature, videos and CDs were distributed, and the overall impression was that demand for OSB is growing rapidly in Europe. Many visitors in fact reported shortages and difficulties in obtaining OSB. 49 Business Card leads were collected at the show and distributed to OSB manufacturing members.

The annual IBS is sponsored by the NAHB, and this year proved to be another good year in terms of overall attendance, albeit at 104,000 visitors it was a little lower than in the previous two years, which saw record housing starts in the US. As in the past, the SBA shared exhibit space in the Canadian Wood Council booth, together with other companies such as TECO. The SBA distributed 350 pieces of literature and CDs at this show, and more than 600 leads were collected by the CWC. The latter will be distributed to members when they become available.

The SBA also participated indirectly in the NW Building Products Expo in Bloomington, MN, with approximately 100 pieces of literature distributed from the Ontario Government booth.

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Standards Update

- It is with pride and a sense of real accomplishment that we can announce that the technical committee on wood panels has finally reached consensus on the new CSA O325 standard on Construction Sheathing, which will soon replace the 1992 edition. After several drafts, meetings, conference calls and much heated debate, we can now move on with a standard that is as closely harmonized to the US PS 2-04 as possible. The only outstanding difference in CSA O325 for OSB is the requirement for a thickness swell test for Single Floor panels, based on a 24-hour soak test of small specimens and an average limit of 20% maximum. Another element of on-going concern is the make up of the committee and we will continue to fight for better “OSB industry” representation in the future. Anyone interested in serving on the committee can communicate with the SBA.
- The SBA has recently been notified about the promulgation of a new European OSB standard, EN300, during the second half of 2006, thereby replacing the 1997 edition. The primary changes in that standard are the addition of mechanical and physical properties for OSB thicknesses over 25 mm, and up to 40 mm. Other changes dealt with requirements for moisture resistance and panel marking and the deletion of two normative annexes. The co-existence of the old and new editions or other conflicting standards at the national level was permitted until January 2007. 29 Member countries of the EU are bound to implement this standard.
- In an effort to bring uniformity to sustainable building practices, the International Code Council and NAHB have announced an agreement to develop and publish a residential green building standard. The announcement was made during a press conference at the International Builders’ Show in Orlando, FL with NAHB Green Building Subcommittee Chairman Ray Tonjes, ICC President Wally Bailey and Rick Weiland, the council’s CEO. The standard will be based on NAHB’s Model Green Home Building Guidelines and should be completed sometime in 2008. On behalf of the wood products industries the American Wood Council has submitted an application for membership in the consensus committee that will be developing this new standard.
- A new committee draft of an international ISO standard for OSB will be presented to the technical committee during the upcoming meeting in Venice, Italy. Anyone interested in commenting on this draft can request an electronic copy from the SBA office. This draft is a derivative of the EN300 standard.

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Update on Forest Certification in Canada

The Forest Products Association of Canada certification commitment has brought about a rapid growth in SFM certification in Canada. Testament to this growth is that one month before the FPAC commitment, 17 million hectares were certified in Canada, and just 5 years later, the number has increased more than 7 fold, to 123.75 million hectares. The State of Canada’s Forests 2005-2006 report clarifies that of the 310 million hectares of forestland in Canada, less than half of it (143 million hectares) is subject to forest management. With 143 million hectares dedicated to forestry operations in Canada, and 123.75 million hectares certified, the Canadian forest sector has drastically closed the gap between the land they are allowed to operate on and the portion of that land that is certified.

The FPAC commitment, the only one of its kind by any national forest products trade association, has pushed Canada into the world leadership position for certified forestlands. Approximately 1/10th of the world’s production forests are certified and yet Canada’s contribution is second to none, accounting for over half of the certifications recognized by the global Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC) and almost one quarter of FSC certifications worldwide.

Million Hectares Certified

REPORTED IN HECTARES	Dec 19 2006	Dec 20 2005	Dec 31 2004	Dec 30 2003	Dec 31 2002
CSA	73.4	69.2	47.4	28.4	14.4
FSC	19.6	15.2	4.4	4.2	1.0
SFI	31.4	36.1	35.5	25.8	12.7
Total for CSA, FSC, and SFI*	123.75	119.8	86.5	57.6	28.1

*If a forest area has been certified to more than one standard, the area is only counted once; hence the grand total of certifications is less than the sum of the individual totals. Source: Data compiled by Kathy Abusow on behalf of the Canadian Sustainable Forestry Certification Coalition.

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Miscellaneous Meetings & Events

- Staff traveled to Vancouver in January to attend the Forintek committee meetings as well as the Value to Wood Research committee meeting. Noteworthy were an announcement of the creation of a single Canadian forest products research institute pooling together the resources of Forintek, Paprican and Feric. The new institute will start operating on April 1st and will be named FPInnovations. A separate announcement followed shortly thereafter about the extension of the Value to Wood Program for a period of two more years with a total budget of around eight million dollars, to be shared by the five institutions involved with the program, namely Forintek, and the universities of British Columbia, Toronto, Laval and New Brunswick. Staff participated in the ranking of the Value to Wood project proposals presented during the Vancouver meeting.
- Staff also participated in meetings of the steering committee overseeing the research project on hygrothermal and mold performance of wood-frame walls conducted at Concordia University in Montreal. The key element was approval in principle to continue the project for an additional two years under the supervision of a new principal investigator and with a slightly modified research plan and protocol. SBA has pledged its ongoing support to this project, together with continued participation by other industry partners such as Forintek and the Canadian Wood Council.
- VPI invites you to a short course on Advanced Selling Skills for Forest Products Personnel: Personal selling methods provide most forest product companies the differentiation strategy necessary to be successful in the marketplace. As the forest products industry becomes increasingly competitive, personal selling skills increase in importance. Those attending this course will learn how to increase their effectiveness in their sales jobs. Specific topics include territorial management, self-motivation, sales negotiation techniques, time management, communication skills, value-added sales techniques and keeping a positive attitude. The course will be held at the Inn at Virginia Tech on March 28th and 29th in Blacksburg, VA. For additional information please contact Bob Smith at 540-231-7107 or rsmith4@vt.edu

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SBA Literature Update

SBA staff were very busy during the last quarter updating a number of pieces of literature in our library. Below is the list of the SBA technical literature we revised and reprinted during the past three months:

- TM425G, German OSB in Wood Frame Construction manual
- TM428S, Spanish OSB in Wood Frame Construction manual
- EL803, Manufactured Housing brochure
- EL803G, German Manufactured Housing brochure
- EL804S, Spanish Industrial Construction brochure
- TB118J, Japanese OSB and the Environment technical bulletin
- TBB01, Technical bulletin booklet. This major update required revising several of the 16 technical bulletins forming part of this compendium, as well as a modified layout.

Please contact us if you would like a hardcopy of these or other SBA publications, or alternatively you can get them all from our free literature page, at www.osbguide.com/osbliterature.html

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