

PRESS RELEASE

Paris, France, November, 1999

The World Federation of Technical Assessment Organizations (WFTAO), is an independent organization dedicated "to exchange and promote the role of Technical Assessments of innovative and non standardized systems and products in the construction field worldwide".

It has been created in September 1996 in South Africa held its second meeting in September 1997 in Ottawa (Canada), its third meeting in August 1998 in Melbourne (Australia) and its fourth meeting in October 1999 in Tokyo (Japan) at the joint invitation of BCJ (Building Center of Japan), CBL (Center for Better Living) and HOWTEC (Japan Housing and Wood Technology Center). And BCJ chaired the meeting.

Let us recall that the term technical assessment means an authoritative favourable declaration of technical fitness for an intended use of an innovative or non standardized construction product systems or process. And the aim of WFTAO is to promote the role of Technical Assessment and facilitate the transfer of national construction industry products to the global marketplace. This implies an awareness and understanding of Technical Assessment by public authorities, regulators, manufacturers, constructors, designers and others.

- WFTAO had already set up in the past :

- a WFTAO mission statement, vision and objectives
- Statutes

- The following documents related to Technical Assessments for the file of the organization were finalized :

- "Format for exchange of Technical Assessment"
- Questionnaire for proposed way of assessment
- Operational procedural rules to the Statutes
- Questionnaire for membership nominations
- Model liaison agreement for mutual recognition or consideration

At the above Tokyo meeting, the main following questions were discussed :

- The WFTAO web site set up which address is the following

<http://www.wftao.com>
- Open discussion on the following items linked to technical assessment : Confidentiality, need for a published report, level of quality assurance, duration of validity, interim or preliminary assessment report, choice of test laboratories.
- Discussion on the following items :
 - similarities and differences for the EIFS (external insulation finition system) technical assessments among WFTAO members
 - costing structure questions related to technical assessments
 - durability in technical assessments
 - collaboration scheme in technical assessment under the liaison Agreement (of WFTAO)
 - measures to be taken on mutual recognition of technical assessments for housing products (among WFTAO members).

And it was decided to undertake new tasks, among them the main following :

- test methodologies
- methodology for a world assessment
- multiparty WFTAO liaison Agreement
- environmental issues
- liaibility and insurance aspects
- policy position on other funding sources of assessment.

At the end of the meeting, Mr. Farhi (CSTB, France) former General Secretary, who reached the end of his term, was replaced by Mr. John Berndt (CCMC, Canada).

The next WFTAO meeting will take place in Washington DC in August 2000, at the invitation of CERF, jointly with an International Symposium and Innovative Trade show 2000.

And the Agenda of this meeting will deal with the tasks undertaken by WFTAO.

For more information on WFTAO, contact :

- WFTAO members in your country
- or the General Secretary :

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Updated list of members of WFTAO (October 1999)

Australia	CSIRO Appraisals
Brazil SA)	IPT (Instituto de Pesquisas Tecnologicas de Estado de Sao Paulo
Canada	CCMC (Canadian Construction Materials Centre)
Czech Republic	TZUS Prague (Technicky a Zkusebni Üstav Stavebni – Praha)
Denmark	ETA-DANMARK
Finland	VTT Building Technology (Valtion Teknillinen Tutkimuskeskus)
France	CSTB (Centre Scientifique et Technique du Bâtiment)
Hungary	EMI Plc (Epitesügyi Minöségellenörzö Innovacioo/RT)
Israël	NBRI (National Building Research Institute)
Italy	ICITE (Istituto Centrale per l'Industrializzazione e la Tecnologia Edilizia)
Japan	BCJ (Building Centre of Japan) CBL (Centre for Better Living) HOWTEC (Japan Housing and Wood Technology Centre)
New Zealand	BRANZ (Building Research Association of New Zealand)
Norway	NBI (Norges Byggforskningsinstitut)
Poland	ITB (Instytut Techniki Budowlanej)
Portugal	LNEC (Laboratorio Nacional de Engenharia Civil)
Romania	INCERC (Institutul de Cercetari in Constructii si Economia Constructiilor)
South Africa	A.S.A. (Agrément South Africa)
Spain	IETcc (Instituto de Ciencias de la Construcción Eduardo Torroja)
United Kingdom	BBA (British Board of Agrément)
United States	NES (National Evaluation Services, Inc.) ICBO Evaluation Service, Inc. CERF (Civil Engineering Foundation Centre)
Russia	FCC (Federal Centre of Certification in construction of Russia's Ministry)

