

This mail service is intended to provide the latest information concerning building regulation and our activities, to domestic and overseas organizations which are engaged in technical assessments and research in the building field. If you no longer wish to receive this mail, please contact us at the following address:

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§ 1. Recent Developments in Japanese Building Regulations

a) Partial Revision of the Building Standard Law on Existing Buildings

In order to further secure the safety of buildings, a partial revision of the Building Standard Law (BSL) was enacted in June 2004. It is expected to be enforced in June 2005, after the technical requirements related to these revisions (which are being discussed now) are fixed and announced.

The general outline of these revisions is as follows:

- (1) Expansion and enhancement of the reporting and the inspection systems in association with buildings
- (2) Corrective recommendations against dangerous existing non-conforming buildings*
* 'Non-conforming buildings' are existing buildings for which the time for the application of the restriction enhancement was postponed
- (3) Streamlining of the regulations concerning existing non-conforming buildings

For reference information about this (Update of BCJ Overview):

http://www.bcj.or.jp/en/01/01_02.html

b) The establishment of the Scenery Act

The Scenery Act was enacted in June and enforced in December 2004, and the enforcement order of the BSL related to this new act was revised. This act aims to establish a legislative framework to make and to preserve good scenery; it is the first legislation in Japan which is exclusively related to scenery.

In order to improve the scenery in urban and rural areas, this act states the fundamental philosophy on improvement of the scenery and the responsibility of the central government,

local governments, developers and citizens. Under this act, local governments decide their own scenery improvement plans. In accordance with this plan, existing key buildings and trees, which are considered essential for the characteristic scenery, will be preserved. To preserve appearances of these key buildings, the provisions of BSL regarding building form, such as bulk and height, were deregulated.

§ 2. Approval of Rooftop Greening Technologies

BCJ carries out Agrément Services which is a voluntary basis approval system for innovative building technologies for which there are no regulations or standards. Its purpose is to promote sustainable building technologies.

BCJ started the Agrément Services for 'The Approval of Building Technologies Associated with Rooftop Greening for Better Environment' in 2003, based on the approval standard which BCJ set up in 2002. The approval standard of rooftop greening has three evaluation criteria: Basic Performance, Environmental Load, and Environmental Improvement Effect. In 2004, BCJ introduced new evaluation system in which applicants can choose suitable criteria to the applying technologies from the designated categories.

We expect that these Agrément Services will serve a key role in future environmental protection of the earth.

For further information about Agrément Services:

http://www.bcj.or.jp/en/02/04/04_01.html#a05

(Information on approval of rooftop greening technologies will soon be uploaded onto the above URL.)

If you are planning to apply for the BCJ Agrément Services, please contact giken@bcj.or.jp

§ 3. International Activities of BCJ since September 2004

a) BCJ participated in the 9th meeting of the WFTAO* in Prague, in September 2004, and made three presentations; the results of a survey on regulated substances regarding indoor air quality in the member countries in which BCJ carried out the survey, a report on how WFTAO should build a relationship with IRCC**, and a presentation on 'technical evaluation and mutual recognition' as a future framework of WFTAO activities, which focuses on relationships between building regulations. BCJ will continue its efforts in the progress of WFTAO.

*WFTAO: World Federation of Technical Assessment Organizations

**IRCC: Inter-jurisdictional Regulatory Collaboration Committee

b) BCJ attended the ICC* 2004 annual conference held in Salt Lake City in September 2004. We exchanged our respective code books (The Building Standard Law of Japan June 2004 and ICC code books) at the International Forum. In November, BCJ had a meeting in Tokyo with Mr. Frank P. Hodge, President of ICC, and Mr. Rick Okawa, Vice President of International Services, ICC. Both sides agreed to continue our mutual information exchange.

*ICC: International Code Council



Participants of
BCJ-ICC meeting
(ICC, MLIT&BCJ)

c) ABCB* is the first Recognized Performance Evaluation Body recognized by the Japanese Government under the Building Standard Law. In November 2004, BCJ and ABCB had a meeting at the BCJ office in Tokyo. Both organizations discussed practical collaboration on technical evaluation to follow up on the previous meeting held in March 2004.

* ABCB: Australian Building Codes Board

d) BCJ and CSTB* held the 18th Japan-France Colloquium on Building, in November 2004 at CSTB in Paris. Both organizations exchanged updated information on activities of the respective organizations. From this, we realized that both organizations have a high interest in, and must take measures on, sustainable development and indoor air quality. Continuing the mutual exchange of information is again identified as being very essential.

*CSTB: Centre Scientifique et Technique du Batiment



Mr. Maugard, President of CSTB (right)
and Mr. Tateishi, President of BCJ

e) As for exchanges with Chinese organizations, BCJ regularly held meetings with CADRG* (twelve times) from 1985 to 2002. In 2004, to correspond to the changes of socio-economic circumstances in both countries, BCJ and CADRG proposed CBL** and CABR*** to start joint meetings and the first meeting of four organizations took place in Tokyo in December 2004. It was reported that China is developing building related regulations along with the introduction of a market economy. Feasibility of Japanese housing design methods (including components) in China was discussed at the open forum where the four organizations welcomed participants from private Japanese companies.

*CADRG: The China Architecture Design and Research Group

**CBL: The Center for Better Living

***CABR: China Academy of Building Research



Japan-China Meeting on Building and Housing Technology

§ 4. BCJ Publications in English

a) Guide to Exporting Building Materials to Japan:

FOAM CORE PANELS / WINDOWS

These booklets have been prepared for those of you who are considering exporting foam core panels or windows to Japan. Each booklet provides an explanation of building code requirements and compliance procedures for these products for use in residential construction. These publications represent our efforts to describe such rules and regulations in a clear and comprehensive manner.

We hope that through our booklets you will have an accurate understanding of Japanese building codes/standards, evaluation systems and the various procedures based thereon.

For more detailed information and how to purchase these booklets:

http://www.bcj.or.jp/en/03/01_03.html

b) The supplementary 2005 edition to BSL

In the summer of 2004, BCJ published the English translation of The Building Standard Law of Japan (*BSL 2004*). The supplementary 2005 edition to the BSL (*Supplementary BSL 2005*) is scheduled for publication in early summer, 2005. It will contain provisions amended after the publication of *BSL 2004*, up until the end of 2004.

We hope that this publication will bring you the most recent information and help your business regarding building regulation.

For those of you who bought *BSL 2004*, we are planning to announce information regarding *Supplementary BSL 2005* prior to its release.

For instructions on how to purchase *BSL 2004*:

http://www.bcj.or.jp/en/03/01_03.html

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