

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

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CONTENTS

- 【1】 Message from our President, Mr. Tateishi**
- 【2】 Recent Changes in Japanese Building Regulatory System
and the Role of BCJ in International Cooperation Activities**
- 【3】 “Sickhouse” Syndrome**

【1】 Message from our President, Mr. Tateishi

In Japan, we say that January is the best time to start something new.

We are pleased to send out our first mail magazine to related organizations around the world.

The Building Center of Japan (BCJ) has been conducting research projects in the architecture and in the building construction fields and has been evaluating newly developed building techniques since its establishment in 1965. In 2000, we started to provide several new services as a designated organization under an amended Building Standard Law of Japan and under the Housing Quality Assurance Act. Thus, the BCJ has been helping to advance building technology and to improve the quality of people's lives.



The BCJ also has been promoting international activities such as participation in world organizations in the building field, making cooperative agreements with overseas evaluation bodies and working together with them on technical evaluations. These activities require both sides to surmount differences in regulatory systems and in business customs.

Recently, not only the distribution of building materials/components and building technologies but also building construction activities have become more global. Under these circumstances, I believe it will be

worthwhile for us to distribute the latest information concerning building regulations and technical evaluation in Japan. It is rather difficult to provide you with such information face-to-face, so we decided to send it by e-mail.

We would very much appreciate it if you would let us know your comments on this service. We hope this information service will facilitate more frequent information exchanges with you, thus furthering the cooperative relationship between us.

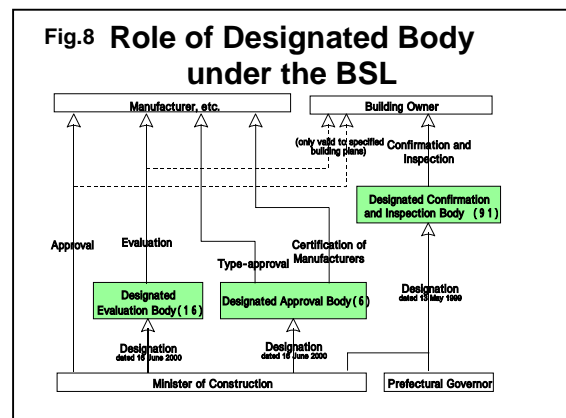
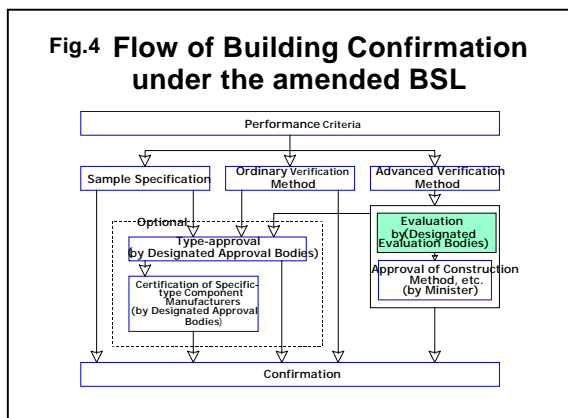
We wish you a prosperous new year.

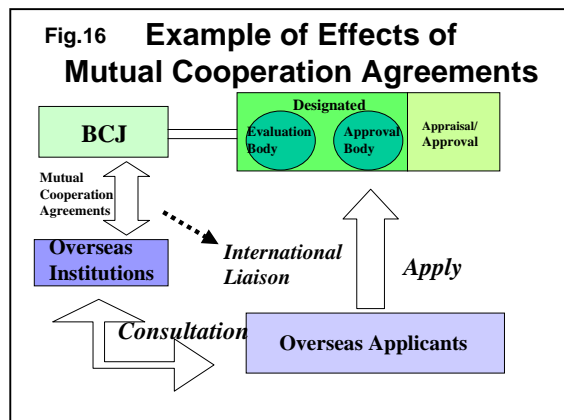
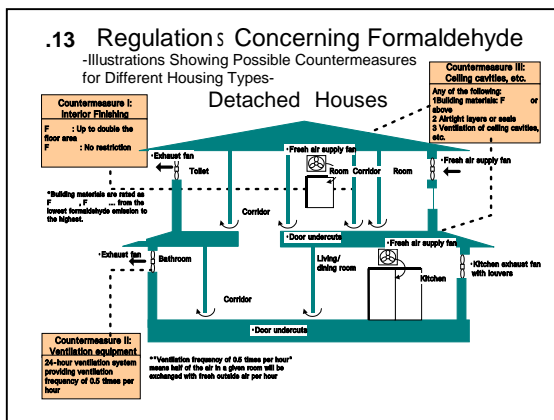
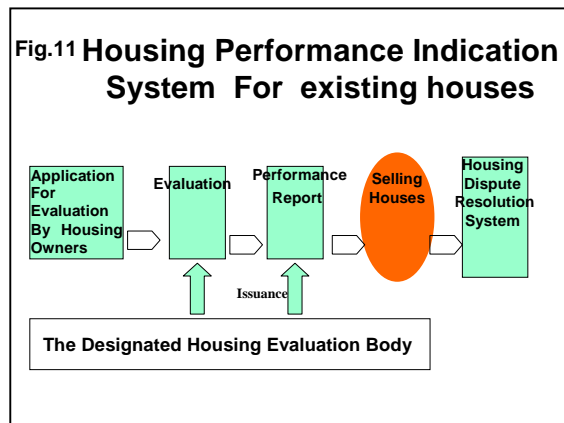
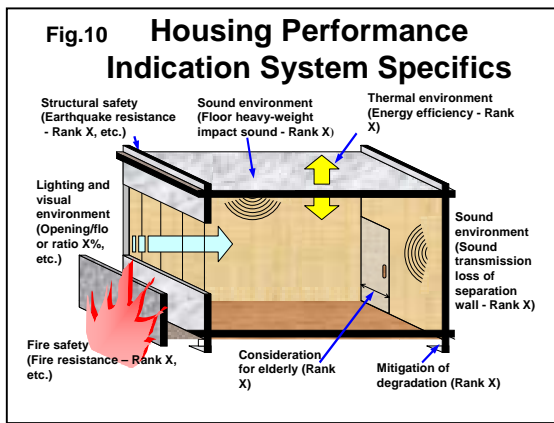
【2】 Recent Changes in Japanese Building Regulatory System and the Role of BCJ in International Cooperation Activities

Abstract

The construction field in Japan has entered a period of great reform, as prescriptive building codes have been replaced with performance-based codes, due mostly to socio-economic changes and globalization. At the same time, a system for the indication of housing performance as well as new regulations to cope with the sick house syndrome have been introduced. There are international activities such as the exchange of information with several countries concerning the introduction of performance-based building codes, mutual recognition and cooperation, and other activities. Through these activities, Japan and these countries, as well as the BCJ and related bodies (the representative evaluation bodies of the respective countries) have been promoting cooperative relationships. We would like to enhance cooperation even further and build stronger and even more cooperative relationships, thereby making contributions to the development of these countries, the related bodies and to the construction field.

The full text is in the next attached pdf file.





【 3 】 “Sickhouse” Syndrome

Have you heard of the “sickhouse” syndrome? In recent years, the sickhouse syndrome has become a major problem in the housing industry. The syndrome is caused by chemical substances, such as formaldehyde and volatile organic compounds(VOCs), emitted from construction materials and other sources. These substances affect human health, causing symptoms which include hypersensitivity to certain chemicals. There has been an increase in the number of people reporting the effects of this syndrome from new and remodeled houses. This problem affects air quality, and for the above reasons, the Building Standard Law was amended, which enforcement started last July.

For the information about this amendment:

http://www.mlit.go.jp/english/housing_bureau/law/index.html

<http://www.bcj.or.jp/sickhouseissue/introduction.html>

Due to this amendment, BCJ has started evaluation activities related to formaldehyde-emitting building materials.

<http://www.bcj.or.jp/sickhouseissue/evaluation.html>

For evaluation of building materials from foreign countries, the Ministry

of Land, Infrastructure and Transport announced last September that foreign test data can be accepted. Further information is available at: http://www.mlit.go.jp/english/housing_bureau/recognition/01.html
If you are interested in making a contract with BCJ, please contact Ms. Keiko ITO at ito_k@bcj.or.jp

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