



This mail service is intended to provide the latest information concerning building regulations and our activities with domestic and overseas organizations, which are engaged in technical assessments and research in the building field.

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CONTENTS

§1. Recent Building-Related Developments in Japan

§2. Recent Activities of BCJ

§1. Recent Building-Related Developments in Japan

a) Changes to the Act on the Rational Use of Energy

This year marks the start of the first commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol, which calls for a 6% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from the 1990 level by 2012. At the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit in July, leaders discussed initiatives against Climate Change and reached agreement on future policies.

In May 2008, the Japanese government amended the Act on the Rational Use of Energy with the aim of strengthening energy-saving measures relating to houses and other buildings. The amended Act will be enforced in 2009 and 2010. The main changes are as follows:

- (1) If energy-saving measures in large buildings are seriously deficient, the government agencies concerned will be able to issue directives that are backed by penalties.
- (2) The objective building of current mandatory reporting requirement for energy-saving measures will be expanded to certain types of small and medium-sized buildings.
- (3) A formal system of inspections of the maintenance condition of energy-saving measures by registered building inspection bodies will be institutionalized. If a building's energy-saving measures are certified as meeting the required standard of maintenance, that building will be exempted from the maintenance reporting requirement.

b) Work Starts on Tokyo Sky Tree—World's Tallest Broadcast Tower

The proliferation of skyscrapers in Tokyo is causing interference with broadcast signals transmitted from Tokyo Tower. To alleviate this problem, a new tower, the Tokyo Sky Tree, is being built in Tokyo's Sumida Ward. At 610 meters, it will be the world's tallest radio tower. BCJ carried out building confirmation for this broadcast tower, and construction work began on July 14. The structure's purpose is not limited to its role as a broadcast

tower; The plans also encompass commercial facilities, including a 32-story office block, display areas, and a museum. If construction proceeds on schedule, the complex will open in the spring of 2012.



An image of Tokyo Sky Tree

§2. Recent Activities of BCJ

a) CASBEE Certification Service Launched

The prevention of global warming has become a priority for the entire world. BCJ already includes environmental evaluations in its existing services, including the Review and Certification of Construction Technology, and BCJ Approval of Innovative Building Technologies. In July 2008, we launched our new CASBEE certification service.

CASBEE, or the Comprehensive Assessment System for Building Environmental Efficiency, is a system used to evaluate comprehensive environmental efficiency, including the improvement of indoor environmental conditions in houses and buildings and the reduction of global environmental loads, in an integrated manner. The results of these assessments are presented in the form of easy-to-understand indicators. Central and regional governments are actively adopting the CASBEE concept, and demand for CASBEE certification is expected to expand rapidly.

b) Publications in English

(1) *A Quick Look at Housing in Japan (6th Edition)* to be Published

In early September, BCJ will publish *A Quick Look at Housing in Japan (6th Edition)*. This book provides an overview of the housing situation and housing policy in Japan. It can be downloaded from the following website:

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

(2) Publication Schedule for the Building Standard Law of Japan

In the previous edition of *BCJ Web News* we stated that a revision of the Building Standard Law of Japan would be published this summer. After reviewing the content, however, we decided to include laws, enforcement orders, enforcement regulations, ministerial orders concerning designated qualifying examination bodies and others and major notifications that were in effect as of June 1, 2008. Publication is now scheduled for January 2009.

c) Acceptance of Trainees

(1) Fire Prevention and Evacuation Specialist from ABCB



At site visit to Cocoon Tower

Mr. Ray Loveridge, an Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) fire prevention specialist, spent four weeks in Japan on a secondment program under an agreement between the ABCB and the MLIT. Mr. Loveridge was in Japan from June 6 until July 2. BCJ accepted him from July 15 to 16 and provided an overview of performance evaluation services, as well as briefings on evacuation safety and fire resistance verification methods. We also arranged site visits for him.

(2) Trainee from China Architecture Design & Research Group

BCJ has a technical cooperation agreement with the China Architecture Design & Research Group (CADRG). Ms. Zhou Xiao Hong of the Institute of Building Standard Design and Research, which is a subsidiary organization of the CADRG, was in Japan from August 3 to 30, studying the management and administration of building evaluation services in Japan. We arranged a training program for Ms. Zhou and provided briefings and answered questions on various aspects of our services.



Photo with BCJ staff members

d) Schedule for Periodic International Meetings

(1) The 3rd Japan-China Meeting on Building and Housing Technology

BCJ, CBL*, CADRG** and CABR*** will hold the Japan-China Meeting on Building and Housing Technology from October 30 to November 1, 2006, in Tokyo, Japan. The main themes will be the environment and earthquake-resistant buildings.

*CBL: The Center for Better Living

**CADRG: The China Architecture Design and Research Group

***CABR: China Academy of Building Research

(2) The 20th Japan-France Building Colloquium

The Japan-France Building Colloquium will be held in Paris on November 17 and 18. A joint session with GG session (MEEDDAT* and MLIT) and CC session (CSTB** and BCJ) will be held on the 17th, and separate GG and CC sessions on the 18th. To commemorate the 150th anniversary of exchange between Japan and France, an international forum with an environmental theme will be held on the 19th with the participation of environmental experts from Japan, France and the EU.

* MEEDDAT: Ministère de l'écologie, de l'énergie, du développement durable et de l'aménagement du territoire

**CSTB: Centre Scientifique et Technique du Batiment

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