



GUIDANCE NOTE

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Issue 4: March 2022

Achieving Compliance with the Timber Trade Federation's (TTF) Action Plan – Assuring Treated Wood Quality

Extract from TTF Policy Position and Action Plan -

3. That preservative treated wood is being produced by or purchased, directly or indirectly, from a treatment provider whose operation has been assessed and approved under an independent and reputable accreditation scheme (eg. WPA Benchmark in the UK, the Nordic NTR scheme or other similar).

Background

In 2017 TTF & WPA collaborated on a survey to identify the strategic priorities needed in order to grow demand for preservative treated timber. The scope and scale of this survey represented the most significant piece of research conducted in this sector for many years. Analysis of the responses identified three priority areas for action, which have since been adopted as TTF policy:

1. To address the common failure to specify treated wood correctly;
2. To address the lack of understanding on how to correctly install and use treated wood;
3. To ensure independent verification of the treatment process.

TTF members with an interest in wood preservation will now be required to demonstrate compliance with these principles **by the end of June 2022**.

Route to achieving required Quality Assurance

By this date, TTF members with timber treatment plants shall be required to operate, document and maintain a quality management system sufficient to ensure that the treatment specifications which are received from customers are met in full and that the quality of wood treated to those specifications can be verified to an independent auditor.

In order to do this the company being audited must be able to demonstrate that a consistent relationship exists, known as a Safe Relationship, between the preservative penetration and retention requirements for a particular species/end use combination and the more easily measurable parameters of the treatment process, such as preservative concentration and pressure cycle, and then be able to control these parameters in subsequent treatment activities.

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Suitable evidence to demonstrate the above will include site specific, documented:

Treatment process operating systems

Management procedures (which should cover customer specifications and the subsequent provision of guidance on the safe and effective use of treated wood)

Records, including internal or third-party system audits and

Treated wood test data to verify that the Safe Relationship has been established and maintained (annual or twice-yearly testing should be sufficient, depending on product mix).

TTF will not require treaters to specifically have ISO 9001 accreditation to comply with their policy requirements on wood treatment. However, such an accreditation provides a good framework within which to organize and record the evidence above. Whichever QA system is used it shall be compliant with WPA *Quality Guidance Note QGN2*, which is a controlled document available from WPA. QGN2 was written to provide guidance on how to manage a wood treatment operation in accordance with the principles set down in BS EN ISO 9001.

Compliance Options

TTF do not plan to be prescriptive about which auditing and accreditation body members use to verify performance levels, providing the principles above are met. Examples include:

1. WPA Benchmark Scheme

This Scheme was developed by a committee of treatment operators, preservative manufacturers and BRE and is operated by the WPA on a third-party basis. It was introduced in 2011 as the first stage of a WPA strategy to build buyer confidence in good quality, fit for purpose treated wood products.

Under this scheme those treaters operating a warranty and/or quality scheme supported by their chemical supplier or other third party will already be in a strong position to provide the required evidence, but scheme membership is not restricted to such operations. Discounted scheme membership and audit fees are available to TTF members. Please contact WPA for further details.

2. Nordic NTR Quality Scheme

For companies treating wood in the Nordic region, membership of the NTR scheme will satisfy TTF quality criteria. Please note that when material is required to be treated in accordance with BS8417 'Preservation of wood – Code of Practice', the desired Use Class will need to be made clear to NTR treaters.

TTF/WPA have produced helpful guidance for NTR treaters on how to meet BS8417 specifications – see our *Guidance Note WPA TW 1*. Also see www.nwpc.eu for more details.

3. Other TTF-Approved National Quality Scheme

There are a number of other national quality schemes for industrial wood treatment, for example **CTBB+** in France (see www.ctbbplus.fr for details). Please check with TTF for advice, depending on the source of your treated wood.

4. Other accreditation body

Another audit and accreditation body recognised as having experience in the timber sector, such as **BM Certification** or **BRE**, can be used provided the quality management system in place at the treatment plant also meets the baseline requirements of **WPA QGN2**.

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For further information or advice, please contact either :

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