

## The latest news about Part L

I am advised that Defra hope to release a nearly final L1 SAP 2005 by the end of the year or possibly early in New Year. We understand that it will be on the BRE web site. This should allow the calculations to be more accurately carried out.

The L2 calculation tool will be released as a public beta version in late March by BRE. We are advised that it is a fully functional version but buggy, rough round the edges, light on documentation and help facilities and needing some more work to make it slick and useable for all. It is unfortunate that this important tool is so late.

There may be a heated only buildings version a bit earlier but this has not been confirmed.

It is hoped that the Minister will be provide information in March which will in effect set out the final version of Part L with all the performance figures. This would help all who are trying to write/develop second tier supporting documents.

The order should be laid before Parliament just before the Summer recess with implementation due in January 2006. So with the calculation tools and the final performance figures not available until March only 9 months prior to Jan 2006 it does not give specifiers or Industry much time to prepare.

It is planned to have a final reality check on the L2 beta calculations in the autumn when ODPM would say whether the software was final and OK for use in January 2006. If they decide that they are not OK, it will be interesting to see what happens in January.

Many have been saying for some time that the present PART L has not been complied with and so we do not have accurate information on the actual energy use of new buildings. This has been born out by a new report from The Energy Savings Trust. The report looks at the extent of compliance with Building Regulations in relation to energy efficiency. It was prepared by BRE, with the assistance of NES, following an earlier study carried out on a small number of dwellings by BRE for ODPM. The original study showed only a third of buildings were compliant with the air permeability level of 10m<sup>3</sup>/h/h<sup>2</sup> set out in Approved Document L1 (ADL1).

The new study was carried out on a larger sample of new dwellings, 36 flats, 31 terraces, 21 semi-detached and 11 detached, throughout the UK. The report shows that 68% of the sample were compliant with ADL1, comprising of 87% of flats and 57% of the remaining sample.

Causes of air leakage included lack of sealing around boiler flues and service pipe penetrations, windows, external doors, and loft hatches. Information relating to boilers and their controls were found to be inadequate and although up to three low energy light fittings had been installed most fittings had been or were about to be replaced.

I believe that it is probable that the situation with industrial buildings (L2) is worse as very little air testing has been carried out. It is key that the policing of the new regulation is carried out effectively and so building control need to understand the revised PART L and to be able to recognize, when a building is correctly built. Since many of the problem areas such as junctions are hidden as soon as they are constructed, it will be difficult to tell if they have been installed correctly.