

Revised edition of the Test for Non-Fragility of Roofing Assemblies

The Advisory Committee for Roofwork (ACR) are pleased to announce the issue of the third edition of ACR (M) 001:2005 Test For Non-Fragility of Profiled Sheeted Roofing Assemblies (the Red Book)

The document describes a means of testing a roof assembly to establish if the assembly is deemed to be non-fragile under the requirements of the Construction Design and Management Regulations (CDM).

This third edition has been published to clarify the qualifications required of the "competent person" who is to carry out the test. The competent person must have an understanding of the test procedure and test data collected but more importantly must understand the nature and qualities of the materials being tested in order to determine worst case scenarios for that material and how it is to be fixed.

We have also taken this opportunity to include an annex on the work done by the HSE to determine load forces created when people trip and fall on to a roof surface. From this analysis, the HSE were able to describe the impact resistance necessary to ensure that the roof could be deemed to be non-fragile and from this we were able to determine a repeatable test that would replicate the human load forces. This publication describes that test.

The Test has been available to the roofing industry since the late 90s and is now fully accepted by all roofing product manufacturers and roofing contractors as the means to provide a non-fragile roofing assembly. The test is fully accepted by the HSE as the quantifiable means to show non-fragility in roofing design.

All members of RIDBA will be sent a copy by post. None Members can download it from the ACR website www.roofworkadvice.info , free of charge, or from any of the ACR participating member associations.

ACR was set up in 1998 to improve roof safety for the construction and building maintenance industry. Its members are the experts from the Associated Bodies that are involved in the manufacture, supply and construction of all roofing materials, together with Technical Officers of the HSE who also provide the Secretariat. ACR documents are written by the roofing industry for the roofing industry and are recognised by the HSE as the Industry Standard to use.

Chris Pearce ACR Chairman

New Guidance Document for Safe Working on Fragile Roofs

The Advisory Committee for Roofwork (ACR) are pleased to announce the launch of their latest Best Practice Guide - ACR (CP) 002:2005 Guidance Note for Safe Working on Fragile Roofs, (The Green Book)

Under the CDM Regulations, that were introduced in the early 90s, roofs should be designed to be non fragile thereby considerably reducing the risks of people falling through roofs during construction and whilst carrying out maintenance. Serious Incident Accident statistics show that this is having a marked improvement on new and recently built roofs.

However over 90% of the existing building stock was built before CDM and is now likely to be fragile.. Building owners, surveyors, builders, roofing contractors, maintenance engineers all need to be aware that

ALL old roofs are likely to be FRAGILE and access to the roof must be carried out by people competent to do so.

The Green Guide prepared by ACR provides a step by step process of Planning, Selection of Maintenance Procedure and Equipment to use in order to carry out the roof maintenance in a safe and orderly manner. The Guide then gives specific examples of typical maintenance needs and how to proceed with such work - such as clearing a gutter, cleaning a rooflight, replacing or repairing a broken roof element.

No one should underestimate the serious risks involved when engaged in working on old roofs. Even the initial inspection process must be carried out with the due care necessary to avoid falling through or off the roof. Remember old roofs may look safe but the unseen fixing may have failed or the lichen covering the sheets may be wet causing a slip with the resultant impact causing the roof to fail.

Going on to old roofs will be dangerous

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FPB brands EU sun directive 'absurd'

A proposed EU directive which will force bosses to make daily risk assessments on the strength of the sun, is being branded unworkable and absurd by a leading business pressure group.

Under the proposed EU Directive on optical radiation, being discussed this week by the European Parliament, all employers with staff working outdoors would be forced to make daily 'risk assessments' of the levels of UV radiation to which their employees could be exposed. This would mean assembling complex meteorological information and analysing its implications for employees.

On the basis of this assessment, the employer is then supposed to devise an action plan to minimise the potential health and safety risk to its employees.

But the Forum of Private Business (FPB) said business owners would shake their head in disbelief at how they could possibly comply with such technical and scientific red tape.

"Most businesses have neither the resources nor, more importantly, the expertise to undertake such scientific analysis,' said the FPB's Chief Executive Nick Goulding. "This directive requires an utterly unrealistic degree of technical and medical expertise that the vast majority of small owners simply do not have. Worryingly it could also open a legal can of worms for employers by creating uncertainty about legal liability in cases of diseases caused by exposure to natural sources of radiation.

"Unless the directive is amended and natural sources of radiation, like sunlight, are removed from its scope, it will be impossible for small businesses to comply with its provisions."