

Do your scaffold boards make the grade?

Scaffold board failures, and in particular the failure of Grade A boards, although thankfully rare can have serious and possibly fatal consequences.

The variety of grading methods for boards is so wide that choosing a board is now unnecessarily complicated. Only about 30 per cent of boards bought today are made in accordance with BS2482, the British Standard for graded scaffold boards. NASC boards are a visual grade to a 1.5m support span, others are graded to trade specifications and/or grouped under the Grade A specification, or 1.2 m support span.

Grade A boards are principally to the manufacturer's specification and this is an area where the quality can vary widely as there are no universally accepted grade 'A' visual or machine grading rules!

In most cases the boards perform, but not always and as part of an ongoing review of British Standards, John Brash together with three other scaffold board manufacturers recently took part in a research project backed by the HSE to review board standards. These results have gone forward to be used to re-write BS2482:1981, Specification for Timber Scaffold Boards, with a separate part now being issued for 38 thick boards only (grading rules for both 1.2m and 1.5m spans). This part will be available for public comment later this year.

One of the main findings of the research was that flatwise modulus of elasticity, the parameter measured by strength grading machines, was far more accurate and consistent in predicting bending strength than any of the visual defect measures.

A scaffold board is an engineered product and should be purchased as such. If a contractor uses Grade A boards he must ensure they are from a principled manufacturer who



can demonstrate a clearly defined method of production within a quality assurance system and employs qualified scaffold board graders.

The most reliable and consistently high performing board is a machine stress graded board to BS2482.

This checklist may be useful when purchasing boards:

- Are your scaffold boards graded to a clearly defined set of rules?
- Are your boards graded by fully trained and independently assessed graders?
- Are your boards manufactured within an ISO 9001:2000 quality assurance scheme?
- Do your boards meet a known performance standard?

... And if any one of these questions cannot be answered satisfactorily

- Am I confident in using boards manufactured by this company?

Whilst every effort has been made to provide reliable and accurate information, we would welcome any corrections to information provided by the Writer which may not be entirely accurate, therefore and for this reason, the NASC or indeed the Writer, cannot accept responsibility for any misinformation posted.

TG2:00 – New European Standard for Steel Scaffold Tube

The NASC Technical committee have decided not to continue with the revised version of TG2. This guidance note had previously been on hold awaiting the review of BS5973. The committee have now concluded that the new guidance note TG20:05 – Guide to Good Practice for Scaffolding with Tubes and Fittings, covers BS EN39 tube sufficiently and gives all the relevant information relating to it.

TECHNICAL INNOVATION AWARD

The NASC Technical Award is designed to encourage good ideas, methods, and solutions to problems, and to provide a platform to demonstrate the levels of ingenuity that exist in the industry.

This is the third year that the Technical Innovation Award has been held and it is now a prestigious event on the NASC calendar.

The Award will be presented at the NASC AGM due to be held at the Hilton Prague Hotel on 25 November 2005.

This is an excellent showcase to promote your company and gain the recognition and publicity for being an industry leader.

Rob Lynch
Chairman - Rob Lynch

PRODUCT AWARD

For original innovations which will benefit the scaffolding industry as a whole.

Entry Rules & Conditions

- (i) Product submissions should be for new inventions which will benefit the scaffolding industry as a whole.
- (ii) Entrants must be willing to permit the NASC to publicise the submission. However, any photographs used will be accompanied by the competitor's name.
- (iii) NASC members can enter this competition free of charge.
Non NASC members may enter the competition, however a cheque for £250 must accompany each submission.
- (iv) Photographs of the product are required and must be supported with written descriptions.
- (v) Entries should be addressed to David Chapman at the NASC, Carthusian Court, 12 Carthusian Street, London EC1M 6EZ and must be received by 30 September 2005.

Finalists will be selected by a Judging Panel, chaired by the NASC Managing Director + 2 Independent Technical & Safety experts. Winners will be announced at the NASC AGM on 25 November 2005. Decisions will be final.

Entry Form

Company Name _____

Company Address _____

Contact Name _____

Confirmation that design is original _____

Telephone _____

Facsimile _____

Email _____

If you are submitting more than one entry

Please complete a separate form

Carthusian Court, 12 Carthusian Street, London EC1M 6EZ
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2005 AWARD