

LOOK OUT!



A review of the challenges and opportunities affecting the British Plastics Federation Windows Group

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First off, let's be absolutely clear. The financial crisis caused by the collapse of the Dubaian economy is absolutely nothing to do with me and my credit card leaving there. (Did I mention I'd been to Dubai?).

I don't know whether it is the approach of the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference, but there seems to be a lot of climate change doubters/deniers getting air time and press coverage.

Nigel Lawson, a long time climate change sceptic and former Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced the setting up of the all-party Global Warming Policy Foundation (www.thegwppf.org). He suggests that the evidence for warming is far from the consensus view that is claimed and that the costs of de-carbonising our planet will be too high, much higher than the costs of coping with any warming. But by far the most interesting claim, at least to me, was that the principal source of evidence for global warming was the Climate Research Unit affiliated to the University of East Anglia. It has been claimed that Professor Phil Jones and some of his colleagues have manipulated the data to remove declines in global temperature. A thousand or so of emails sent or received by Jones have been published on the internet (<http://www.warwickhughes.com/blog/?p=308> if you're interested - a

60MB zip file of emails and documents) and they are claimed to be evidence that the science is far from settled. There are doubts expressed over the methods used to gather the data, over whether the earth has experienced a similar warming about 1000 years ago and even where weather stations were based. Those based in rapidly growing urban centres are inevitably going to show temperature climbs over time.

In addition, the data have been "corrected" meaning they have been altered to take account of possible anomalies in the way they were taken, which is standard practice. However, the original raw data is not being made available for other scientists to check on the adjustments. Freedom Of Information requests from sceptics have been denied because it was "not in the public interest". There are other claims that the raw data was thrown away in the 80s due to lack of storage capacity and only the "value added" data is available.

Can it be that one of the main supports for the whole understanding of climate change is not available for scrutiny? Are we basing the whole of our future on such shallow foundations?

I don't know whether our planet is warming. I don't know whether, if it is warming, it is our fault. I don't know whether we can reverse any warming that is taking place. I do know that it does not feel right for society to spend vast amounts of money trying to correct something that may not be happening based on data that is not available. I'm not a climate change denier, but I do believe we need a mature and informed debate and at the moment that is not happening.

Moves are afoot within CEN TC33/WG1/TG5 to amend EN 12608 (PVC-U profiles for windows and doors) and Terry Roberts of Ineos attends for the UK. We received a lot of technical bumph about the proposed amendments but which did nothing except hold out the prospect of a windfall for the test houses as systems suppliers would have to have all impact tests re-done.

The UK is against this proposal because we have been given no justification or evidence that windows are failing due to impacts in real life. (Perhaps the raw data has yet to be value added). We asked for such evidence and submitted comments on the proposals. Terry was

unable to attend the last meeting of TG5 where comments were discussed and tabulated. All the UK comments were ignored and omitted from the table for reasons that are unknown. We are writing a formal letter of complaint to the TG convenor.

Although I have some concerns over the science underpinning climate change measurements, I am not against energy saving. At the Energy Efficiency Partnership for Homes (EEPH) concern was expressed that Energy Savings Trust Energy Advice Centres were giving out poor advice on windows and we were asked to do a bit of mystery shopping and I was pleasantly surprised at the information I was given. I got some pretty accurate if basic information about thermally insulated frames, "K" glass, triple glazing and gas filling. I was pointed to the EST website and to Energy Saving Recommended window suppliers. I also received a promise that they will get some more information and email me with it. I have to say I was quite impressed.

While being guided through the EST web site (www.energysavingtrust.org.uk) I came across something called the "Carbon cutter" which asks you all sorts of questions about the structure of your house, your electrical appliances and how often and how you use them, how often you fly/drive, what size and type of car you have and so on. It turns out that my house has a carbon footprint of 3.5 t/yr, my appliances and lighting 1.04t/yr and my travel arrangements 5.16 t/yr. All pretty broad brush stuff but interesting that I can make most savings by downsizing my car and not using the aircon on it. The tool also recommended that I consider replacing my ageing dishwasher and washing machine with ESR rated modern ones but, disappointingly, didn't recommend sharing a bath with a friend.

Good news on the Green Public Procurement initiative from the EU. You may remember the ludicrous piece of work that came from a consultant well versed in the skills of cut and paste from the internet, concerning the procurement of windows, with so many factual errors and reproduction of Greenpeace nonsense from yesteryear. If you can't remember it, good for you, because I can't bring myself to read it again. Anyway, after complaints from various Member States, the Commission have recognised that the report was

less than useful and have abandoned it. They are setting up a new Windows Group to address the green procurement of them. Lets hope they make a better fist of it this time around.

At the Defra meeting where this was reported, it was also reported that both the aluminium and wood window industries are researching ways to extend their reference service lives to 60 years. This would give them an obvious advantage in the market. When we managed to get the RSL of PVC-U windows increased from 25 to 35 years, it took a sizeable cheque to BRE and a lot of evidence of existing windows that have been around for years. Obviously we can't do this if we wish to extend the RSL further as we don't have PVC-U windows that are 60 years old, but we need to do something if we are to maintain parity with the other materials. After all, one of the criticisms of "plastic" is that it lasts for thousands of years in landfill. By the same token, PVC-U frames should be going nowhere soon. The definition of the end of the life of a window was agreed as when it was unable to accept replacement components. Given that windows of any material use pretty much the same hardware, gaskets and sealed units, then there should be no problem with matching the RSL of other framing materials, but how do we prove it.

Some time ago, I developed a draft protocol for accelerated ageing of an already old window. Maybe it's time we dusted it down and had another look. You can download it [here](#). Please share any comments you have.

An update on our old friends prEN1627-30 on burglary resistance. I wasn't aware of it until recently, but the UK have submitted an appeal, including a video, against these standards on the basis that they are not repeatable or reproducible. France has also appealed. There is a meeting arranged for 7th December chaired by CEN Management Centre to see if the experts can have one last shot at resolving the differences. This is, to say the least, unlikely. In the event of failure to reach agreement, the matter is referred to the CEN BT Management Group at their next meeting in March who come to their own decision. Should they decide in favour of the standards

then the last option open is via Government. I hope to have more details to share with you soon.

As we approach the end of 2009, it's time again to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.



But then again you may feel like a Bob Rivers Twisted Christmas Carol Festival. If you have never heard Bob Rivers' take on classic carols (forget Walking in a Winter Wonderland, try Walking Round in Women's Underwear) you can listen to them [here](#). Certain to liven any office Christmas party is 12 Days of Layoffs. Click on Twisted Tunes under Playlist and you too can share the joys of Yellow Snow! Yellow Snow! Yellow Snow! and Wreck the Malls.

Reference	BPF Windows Group Publications	Price ea.
SEL/3	Selecting the standard	£5
323/1	COP for the reinforcement of high impact modified PVC-U windows and doors	£10
332/1	Guidelines for the welding of PVC-U profiles for windows and doors	£10
333/1	Guidelines for welding : Laminated shopfloor checklist, A4 size	£3
334/1	Guidelines for welding : Laminated shopfloor checklist, A3 size	£4
336/1	Guidelines for the measurement of PVC-U colour and gloss	£10
337/2	Guidelines for the design and installation of PVC-U conservatories	£25
340/1	Conservatories - Laminated planning permission flow chart, A3 size, 1993	£4
342/1	Conservatories - Laminated building regulations flow chart, A3 size, 1993	£4
345/2	Materials for gaskets and weatherstrips for windows doors, conservatories and curtain walling - Specification and performance requirements	£10
351/1	Guidelines for the use of PVC-U windows and frames in commercial/light industrial applications	£10
355/1	Infill panels for doors and windows	£10
356/2	COP for the installation of PVC-U windows and doorsets in new domestic dwellings	£20
357/1	Replacement windows and planning law	£1.50
358/1	Guidelines to Good Business Practice	£3
359/1	Specification for Composite Doors	£10
360/1	Specification for sliding patio doors made from PVC-U extruded hollow profiles	£15
W363/1	Guidelines for the selection and application of fasteners for the manufacture of plastics windows and doorsets	£20
	Guide to Building Regulations, Building Control and FENSA (CD or booklet)	£5ea
W365/1	A brief history of Windows - Guide to Sympathetic Replacement Design	£5
	A British Plastics Federation Windows Group Guide	(pdf only)
W366/1	PVC-U Windows and Doorsets - Standards, Sustainability, Specification	pdf £20
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