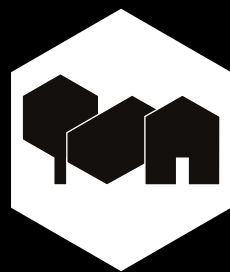


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| TECHNICAL NOTE | Tile Batten Quality Control |
| FOR | Importers, Merchant, Manufacturers |
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Significant problems with the quality of Tile Batten appear to have developed or worsened over the last two years of COVID.

Third party quality control and training are essential to ensure graders in the Baltics and potentially elsewhere are qualified and maintain standards. With little or much less opportunity for third party inspectors to be visiting overseas mills in the last two years it is perhaps not surprising quality standards have fallen but this does not make it in any way acceptable.

Combine this with the unprecedented demand we saw in 2020 /2021 and buyers unfortunately had little opportunity or incentive to complain if quality standards fell. We are now seeing the consequences with the move back to a Buyers' market, increasing the opportunity to lodge complaints and questioning quality in different ways.

WHAT WE CAN DO

Batten Sizes

The national standard BS.5534 is very clear about the requirement for size of battens. ***Tolerances on basic sizes: width +/-3mm; depth -0, +3mm; based on measurement at a reference moisture content of 20%.***

We would strongly urge Importers, Merchants, Buyers, and End Users to be doing spot checks on each delivery of Tile Batten they receive and rejecting deliveries where sizes are not consistently meeting these requirements at 18% moisture content. Particularly where the depth is less than 25mm or less than 38mm as these are critical for Roofers safety. It is easy to neglect receipt inspection based on cost, but it is an essential element of control.

Timber Treatments

Where required Tile Batten should be preservative treated to meet the requirements of Use Class 2 for

a Desired Service Life of 60 years using a pressure impregnation process.

There are claims that suppliers may be cutting corners by using some form of dip treatment. It is a little difficult to understand such claims when the mechanism to ensure correct treatment has taken place is very simple.

A treatment certificate must be requested for each receipt, confirming that the goods supplied meet the requirements of Use Class 2 using a pressure impregnation process. This applies specially to imported tile batten which is treated overseas. It is now a requirement for all delivery notes from TDUK members, which include preservative treated products, to show the specific Use Class of the treated items in this case Use Class 2.

TDUK has also implemented a requirement that all treatment plants used by its members whether they are in the UK or Overseas must be third party quality assured. This gives Buyers an additional reassurance which can be confirmed by obtaining the treatment plants third party QA certificate.

Third Party Quality Assurance

Members must ensure the BS.5534 Tile Batten they are purchasing is subject to specific 3rd Party Quality Assurance both for production of the Tile Batten and its preservative treatment and should obtain copies of the QA certificates as part of their purchase records.

Importers are responsible for placing BS.5534 marked Tile Batten on the UK market and therefore in doing so take on the manufacturers legal responsibility to ensure the product is fully compliant with the requirements set out in BS.5534, as claimed by the mark on each piece. For safety critical products such as Tile Batten Importers should be able to demonstrate records of a formal programme of technical due diligence and random inspection which ensures the products, they are placing on the UK market are fully compliant with the requirements set out in BS.5534.

These records are likely to include:

- Random checks of sizes and images of the supplier marks appearing on each piece
- Links from the Supplier marks to the QA certificates within company purchase records
- Records of non-conformance and corrective actions implemented by the Supplier
- Where any of the above indicate it may be necessary records of random reinspection to confirm compliance with BS.5534 criteria.

For further information or queries on this topic, please contact Nick Boulton, Head of Technical and Trade, Timber Development UK nboulton@tff.co.uk