

Concrete Industry Initiative – Joined Up Thinking



The British Ready Mixed Concrete Association (BRMCA) and CONSTRUCT (The Concrete Structures Group) have formed an alliance to shape the Concrete Sector in years to come.

The two associations have agreed to work together to better understand the nuances of each others particular element of the overall construction process.

Each is committed to working together to improve understanding of the market requirements and to improve working practices. This will enhance the service given to end users and clients.

Initially, BRMCA and CONSTRUCT have created a Joint Steering Committee and Technical Committee to bridge the gap between the supply industry and contracting. The Technical Committee will then invite specific technical comments and input from related groups once the principle target areas have been identified.

Three ‘Steering Committee’ meetings have already been held serving to outline target areas.

Issues such as communications, availability and ordering techniques have been identified on the marketing side. Some of the more Technical Issues identified include the following, covering Design Criteria, Ordering, Regional Availability and Placement Techniques:

- High Strength Concrete
- Self Compacting Concrete
- Early Stripping Times
- Sustainability
- Admixture Utilisation
- Site Practices
- Production Quality Controls
- Project Controls

It is hoped that the above can feed back into the further development of the National Structural Concrete Specification and enhance its influence and utilisation within the market sector.

Member representation and committed participation has helped the success of the initiative and the level of interest shown reflects the enthusiasm on all sides.

Pictured Below are Mr Chris Chapman (Chairman of BRMCA) and Mr Martin Stephenson (Chairman of CONSTRUCT) at the recent Joint Steering Committee meeting 07 May 2008.



The Chairmen were enthusiastic about the potential of the initiative and stated:

“We feel that the benefits of this initiative to the industry as a whole could be huge. Collaboration between the Supply Industry and Contractors can only increase awareness and improve understanding and co-operation between all concerned.

It is essential that both parties understand the needs of the other and work together to deliver the complete package to clients. It is hoped that this initiative will be the first of many and will set the template for future industry development”

The first of a series of documents to generated covers High Strength Concrete (HSC), in terms of availability & Associated Ordering Requirements.

The document is intended to offer Guidance for Clients, Main/Management Contractors, Engineers and Specialist Concrete Contractors alike with regard to High Strength Concrete in terms of:

Specification/Design (covering use of available cement types)
Constituent Material restrictions (Specifically Aggregate Type)
Ordering (Ready Mixed Concrete Plants, Notice Period and Specification)
Availability (offering indicative UK mapping re: Geological sources, Quarry Locations/Material classification and Ready Mix Plants)

Once complete, the Technical Committee will then move on to Self Compacting Concrete (SCC), detailing the benefits in terms of Overall Cost Savings, Surface Finish, Speed of Construction and HSE recognised Health & Safety advantages.

In addition, a Joint advertising campaign is being scheduled, which includes input from BAR (The British Association of Reinforcement), together with a number of editorials which will include specific detail supplied by Member Companies highlighting how the agreed directives are being applied in practice.

The Target for 2008 is to hold a major Interface Event between Suppliers & Contractors, marketed as a 'Briefing Day' in September.

The Day will concentrate on the Positives and will allow feedback and development of future initiatives.

Joint Presentations will take place, with Member Representatives taking the stage together to establish a cohesive approach to the day.

The Associations themselves are well established and have active membership:

BRMCA represents the interests of ready-mixed concrete producers across the UK and is part of the Quarry Products Association (QPA).

The association leads the way in the strategic development of the concrete industry in terms of innovation, product development and client/contractor liaison.

BRMCA's remit covers generic issues such as Sustainability Impact and Reduction of Co2 Emissions, Product Development, Technical, Environmental, Health and Safety, Industry Legislation and Government Policy/Liaison, plus promotion of building systems using ready-mixed concrete.

CONSTRUCT is an association of member companies dedicated to the task of improving the safety efficiency of building in-situ concrete frames and associated structures.

It is managed by a Council comprising an elected Chairman, Secretary and representatives from each category of membership. The main aims of the association are:

- to promote safe working practices
- to identify and address issues which impede best practice and buildability.
- to actively work with clients, designers and others to maximise benefits in speed and economy during the design and construction of in-situ concrete frames.
- to promote innovation in the use of concrete in frames and structures.
- to promote and encourage training and education initiatives.

Please contact either Mr Martin Hardwick (BRMCA Product Director) or Mr Robin Holdsworth (Executive Secretary of CONSTRUCT) to express your interest in attending this event. Contact details are given below:

BRMCA – www.brmca.org.uk

CONSTRUCT - www.construct.org.uk