

26 October 2007 BCA statement

REACTION TO FIRE OF CABLES – EUROCLASSIFICATION ACCORDING TO THE CONSTRUCTION PRODUCT DIRECTIVE

BCA STATEMENT OF POSITION

Electric cables have finally obtained a European Classification for their Reaction-to-Fire (*) performance. The Decision n.2006/751/CE was published on the EC Official Journal on 27 October 2006.

The cables will be grouped in 7 Classes, A, B1, B2, C, D, E and F. Their contribution to fire, measured by heat release and flame spread, is the main classification criteria, but the emissions of smoke and its acidity are considered as additional classification criteria.

To enable Notified Bodies (third party bodies recognized and notified by any Member State) to issue certification of product conformity, it is necessary to prepare European Harmonized Product Standards (ENs) and other supporting standards under Mandate of the European Commission.

It is the job of CENELEC to develop and publish the necessary test methods, classification, extended application rules and product standards to enable product certification. It is expected that this process will take place over the next 2 - 3 years.

At present (October 2007) and until the time of the publication of the Mandated standards mentioned above, it is not possible to issue any Certification for CE Marking according to the CPD for cables. Any “CPD approved” reference on cables is incorrect, misleading and has to be interpreted as an inappropriate attempt to influence the markets and National Authorities.

National Authorities will, where appropriate, include the classification into National Regulations indicating which Class is mandatory when applied to a particular Construction. In these regulated applications, only CE marked and certified cables under the CPD should be used.

The present position of the UK government is not to include reaction to fire for cables as a mandatory requirement in the Building Regulations.

We will inform all interested parties in time on the further steps of implementation.

26 October 2007

(*) The response of a material under specified test conditions in contributing by its own decomposition to a fire to which it is exposed.