

## A LOOK AT THE CLADDING SECTOR

MCRMA represents the leading manufacturers and suppliers of metal-based building envelope systems and, since its formation in 1990 the Association has been regarded as the leading authority on building envelope systems. MCRMA has established itself as the voice for the industry and works closely with a variety of industry bodies and National and International standards committees to ensure that best practice is followed at all times. MCRMA is a member of the Construction Products Association (CPA) and is ideally placed to influence government policy. The Association has long campaigned in the industry for improved technical knowledge and understanding of building envelope construction and to this end has produced a range of authoritative technical design guides.



*Manchester Courts, Euroclad Facades*

The pace of change in the industry in recent years has become relentless and, as part of its continuing drive to raise standards and ensure compliance with the ever increasing demands of Building Regulations, MCRMA has established a series of working groups to focus on a range of new and emerging technologies, products, systems and initiatives. Groups cover the subject areas of acoustics, floor/deck construction and the government-backed Green Deal.

### **Acoustic Group**

The MCRMA acoustic group has had a long established relationship with the University of Salford which has produced a software package for predicting the sound transmission through metal cladding systems. The package which is available for use by members can be used at the design stage to assist in the selection of component parts for use within proprietary systems.

The group will shortly be embarking on a collaborative project to establish the performance benefits of multi-layer cladding systems when tested to ISO 140-18:2006, which specifies a laboratory method of measurement of the impact sound insulation of roofs and rooflights excited by artificial rainfall. The work will bring together the extensive work which has already been undertaken by member companies and will evaluate the performance criteria for different and contrasting systems.

The floor deck manufacturers and contractors group in association with the Steel Construction Institute (SCI) has recently reviewed the impact of Eurocodes and how they will impact on detailed design calculations.

Members of the MCRMA recognise the importance of the non-domestic refurbishment sector and support the government's Green Deal initiative to provide support for owners and tenants of older buildings who may wish to upgrade the thermal performance to modern standards. To ensure that members fully understand the issues and can provide detailed and appropriate advice to specifiers, the MCRMA has established a forum to monitor the development of the scheme. Members will be best placed to provide detailed guidance on suitable measures and packages that will meet with the financial requirements of the "golden rule" and provide a return on expenditure for thermally efficient and sustainable refurbishment.

### **Zero carbon working groups**

With the UK government's wish to follow a steady path towards zero carbon non-domestic buildings by the end of the decade, the MCRMA was asked to contribute towards a series of Working Groups at the start of the summer period. The purpose of the groups was to formulate a view about what could be readily achieved by the construction industry for the incremental step scheduled for Part L 2013. The MCRMA offered what it considered to be a realistic approach for both roof and wall cladding systems and DCLG will shortly be issuing recommendations for public comment.

MCRMA has also established an Independent Consultants Group. Consultants from the group will provide guidance at the design stage and monitor the on-site assembly and construction of quality and reliable non-domestic buildings. Furthermore, members of the Group will provide advice on meeting the requirements of the Part L2 Building Regulations and they will also ensure that the finished building reflects the parameters set out and agreed at the design stage. This group will provide a focus for clients who wish to be associated with thermally efficient, reliable and sustainable buildings.

MCRMA chairman Brian Watson commented, “We are delighted with the calibre of the consultants who have joined the Association. The partnership of the Independent Consultants Group and MCRMA further establishes the Association as the leading authority on all aspects of the metal building envelope”.

All members of the Independent Consultants Group operate to the highest standards and it is a condition of MCRMA membership that they meet the requirements of the Members Charter. The founder members of the group are Barry Jackson Associates, Building Sciences, David Hicks Consultants Ltd, H W Roofing and Cladding Services Ltd, K F Roofing, Keith Kendal and Michael Kilbey Associates. Since the formation of the Independent Consultants Group, MCRMA has been approached by several consultants who wish to apply for membership and the Association hopes to announce new members in due course.

In another move to strengthen its knowledge base and to capitalise on the technical expertise of its members, MCRMA has recently formed a Rainscreen Group to ensure that architects and designers get the most out of the specification of rainscreen façades. This group, formed from companies within MCRMA membership, includes the principal companies who supply metal based systems and component parts used within the fabrication and construction of rainscreen cladding systems.

### **Design and practicality**

Thanks to the development of a wide range of stylish and natural finishes, rainscreen façades are becoming increasingly popular both for their design and for their practicality and with the latest advances in rainscreen technology, these systems have become more affordable and are no longer confined to high-spec developments.



*Atrium Cardiff, Euroclad Facades*

The technology used within modern rainscreen systems provides a weather skin which can be attached to an existing wall or new sub-structure and allows the incorporation of insulation systems which comply with the latest energy efficiency standards and building regulations. Rainscreen systems also offer specifiers and building owners the opportunity to explore the use of colour and scale to provide a visually exciting or contrasting façade.

Members of the group have been involved in the development of rainscreen systems over many years and have an extensive knowledge of their use and application on all types of buildings. In addition, the Rainscreen Group provides a technical focus for specifiers who wish to use these highly aesthetic systems on prestigious new build developments or refurbishment projects. Members of the Rainscreen Group speak with authority on the subject, provide support based on years of knowledge and give reliability in the systems they supply and manufacture.

The Association is updating its Membership Charter to reflect the current concerns of the industry with particular reference to health and safety and environmental issues. In the new Charter, the MCRMA undertakes to ensure that its members undertake all work in accordance with relevant health and safety legislation and have a health and safety policy which they uphold both in principle and practice.

In addition, members are required to have due regard for environmental issues during procurement, delivery (including installation implementation) and waste disposal and members are committed to using /their best endeavours to minimise adverse environmental impact in the provision of their products and/or services.

The environmental and sustainable benefits of metal are now recognised by clients, designers and engineers alike and have led to a much wider use of metal in construction. MCRMA and its members will show you how to create imaginative and innovative building designs that offer cost-effective and sustainable solutions which will benefit future generations.

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