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Joint CCBFC/PTCBS Task-Group on
Implementation of a New Code Development System

Report of the Fourth Meeting
18, 19 October 1999
St. John's Newfoundland.

Members present

Chair: Bruce Clemmensen
Ann Borooah
Jeannot Fecteau
Chris Fillingham
Tom Makey
Tim Macaulay
Rick McCullough
Dick Miller
Krystyna Paterson
Ross Rettie
Ted Ross
Chuck Sanderson
Bob Thompson
Chris Tye

IRC Staff:

Bob Bowen
Richard Desserud
John Archer

Visitors:

Rod McPhee, Canadian Wood Council
Margaret Kuzyk- PTCBS Saskatchewan
Bruce Stebbing – PTCBS NWT
Wolfgang Dautel – PTCBS Nunavut
Fred Hollett –. Fire Commissioner, Newfoundland

Members Absent

Yaman Uzumeri

Review of the Report of the 3rd Meeting.

The report of the 3rd meeting was approved with minor modifications. The revised version can be found on the Task Group Web Page.

Core Building, Fire And Plumbing Codes

The Revised Committee Paper on Core Codes was included in the report of the last meeting.

The key issue is that time and resource limitations will result in very few additional subjects presently in P/T codes being considered for inclusion in 2003 core codes. For the time being it is assumed that the core codes will be limited to the subjects covered in the 1995 NBC, NFC and NPC.

The task group awaits the recommendations of the PTCBS on the handling of administrative provisions in the core codes. Such requirements may be candidates for a progeny document.

Further discussion is necessary regarding the question of the degree to which non-technical barrier-free design requirements belonged in the core building code.

Single Coordinated Public Review

The Task Group discussed a discussion paper on objectives of the NBC prepared for the CCBFC the PTCBS, the CCFM/FC and others. It was originally hoped that this paper would also act as a public consultation

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document on the objectives to be retained or eliminated from the National Code Documents, however the Task Group on Implementation on Objective based codes concluded that this was not practical.

The form of the public consultation document and the means by which the coordinated public review will be undertaken will be developed by this Task Group.

Documents from Ontario, Alberta and BC used for similar public consultation activities were discussed, as well as the so-called "context" paper. The latter will be helpful during the discussion of code objectives. The Task Group felt the approach taken by Ontario in which clear questions were raised would be the most appropriate approach. There was also agreement that the tone of the paper should not focus on deletions, but should state the objectives in a positive way.

While focus groups with the general public had worked well on some specific issues, such as municipal roles in Alberta, the Task Group concluded this approach would be too expensive and time consuming for this exercise.

The timing and approach of the consultation activity needs to be put in order in advance of the meeting of Deputy Ministers in February 2000.

The task group was circulating a questionnaire to chief code administrators on the code development process as a check on status of preparations for the new system.

Provincial And Territorial Participation

It was reported that the Council of Canadian Fire Marshals and Fire Commissioners had established a small Task Group to coordinate the participation of the fire services in the new system. A questionnaire has been prepared for that group to gauge each jurisdiction's plans regarding using the new system for fire code development. It was agreed that such a questionnaire would be of value for all the codes and that it should be sent to senior officials in each province and territory (i.e. PTCBS, CCFM/FC and CACP members)

The responses will help in discussions at the Deputies meeting.

The Task Group suggested improvements to the questionnaire and a revised version is attached as appendix A.

Provincial/Territorial Advisory Committee(s).

The task group discussed the form of a new provincial/territorial advisory committee addressing the building, fire and plumbing codes. The initial view was that it would be a committee that represented all three codes and which would meet periodically on that basis, but which also had the capacity to divide up and meet separately with a single code focus or on operational issues. A discussion paper will be prepared setting out how the committee might operate for the next meeting of the task group and for the Deputies meeting.

Resolve Present Technical Differences.

It was reported that Fred Nicholson has agreed to Chair the Working Group. It was agreed to invite him to attend the next Task Group meeting.

The Task Group discussed how to get the ball rolling on this matter. The proposed survey/questionnaire was seen to be a useful tool to determine the P/T plans.

It was decided that as a first step, the provinces and territories will provide a list of all technical differences by the end of 1999. Intent statements for these differences will not necessarily be included.

Circulation of Changes to the Provinces and Territories.

An example issue on impact noise was discussed to illustrate how standing committees are implementing this recommendation. The Standing Committee on Houses has referred the attached proposal on impact noise control to the CCBFC for policy advice.

It was noted that there was little information in the proposal on which judgement could be based. It should be expected that when such a proposal is sent for such advice it should include the same amount of information as that required for a code change submission coming from outside the committee. It was expected that such request would be discussed by the CCBFC first and the commission would be clear on the nature of the advice needed.

NRC Role

There was discussion on a possible expanded role for the Canadian Codes Centre in ensuring uniform interpretation of code requirements. It was noted that the involvement of P/T in dealing with inquiries from code users varied among the jurisdictions.

It was agreed that a protocol be prepared spelling out the role of all in dealing with inquiries including such items as referring the inquirer to the municipality first and vetting published collections of CCC opinions to the P/T first.

Urgent Issues and Standards Updating.

The Task Group noted that one of the reasons this subject is an issue is the length of time between editions. However, a too frequent cycle also presents logistical problems.

It was agreed that it be proposed to the Deputy Ministers at their meeting in February 2000 that there be a three year coordinated code cycle, capability for a one year "urgent" change process, and provision for the provinces and territories to act independently on issues of particular urgency for their jurisdiction. It was noted that the issue of provincial/territorial acceptance of standards updating remains unresolved but this revised cycle might solve the problem.

Equitable Cost Sharing

Bob Bowen outlined the contents of a proposed revised discussion paper on "Fair and Equitable" Core Code Development Funding. This paper is still in preparation at IRC.

A suggested outline is:

Background:

- the previous process was two step, national then provinces in series
- there was a separation of the two processes.
- the national system has been funded through federal base funding and sales. Pricing and sales became the key income stream for the support of national process.
- provincial/territorial process were funded through base provincial funding
- the CCBFC strategic plan identified that everyone is facing a resource crunch, things need to be done smarter and more efficiently
- there is an initiative underway for an integrated national code development process

The new system:

- integrated

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- based on core code concept
- provinces will opt for parts of the process that they wish greater involvement in
- clearly a collective benefit.
- support of core code development:
- concept of fair and equitable
- options using population base or construction permits are probably not feasible in present situation nationally.
- current mechanism of raising resources for the core is through product sales and licensing which continues to be a viable option for medium term.
- everyone contributes the same to the national process
- a fair system would recognize the contribution of service provider of core component which impacts cash flow between partners.

The paper will be circulated in advance of the next meeting and the final version will be part of the briefing materials for the Deputies meeting.

Open Tracking System

A Discussion Paper was distributed (see Appendix B). IRC is in the process of designing the system.

Meeting of the Deputies

Draft Agenda for next Deputy Ministers meeting was discussed and suggestions for improvement were made. (Appendix C).

Briefing documents are to be prepared by IRC prior to the end of December.

Next Meetings

The next meetings are scheduled for:

January 24 & 25, 2000 in Toronto

April 3 & 4 in Vancouver or Victoria

June 12 & 13 in Montréal

APPENDIX A

Survey on Provincial/Territorial Intentions on Implementation of the New Code Development System

Core Building, Fire And Plumbing Codes

Recommendation:

That the CCBFC, NRC and the provinces and territories endorse the concept of “core building, fire and plumbing codes” which would contain all necessary requirements for widely agreed-upon issues (e.g. health and safety) and which the provinces and territories ideally should not have to amend. Issues considered appropriate for a national approach but which are outside the scope of the core codes, could be published in separate stand-alone (progeny) documents, such as the model energy codes. Priorities in subject areas outside the core codes would remain the responsibility of the provinces and territories.

1. Will your province/territory support the concept of core building, fire and plumbing codes?
 Yes Likely Unlikely No

Single Coordinated Public Review

Recommendation:

That a single coordinated public review of proposed changes to the core codes, as well as provincial and territorial additions to the core codes, be established to ease the burden on reviewers, minimize local variations and reduce the time required for adoption of the core codes

1. The work plan for production of the 2003 codes presently shows a coordinated public review on objectives of the building, fire and plumbing codes approximately during the 3rd Quarter of 2000.

Does your province/territory intend to participate in this coordinated review?

- Yes Likely Unlikely No

If yes or likely does your province/territory intend to take the lead role in your jurisdiction?

- Yes Likely Unlikely No

2. The work plan for production of the 2003 codes presently shows a coordinated public review on technical updating to the building, fire and plumbing codes approximately during the 2nd Quarter of 2001.

Does your province/territory intend to participate in this coordinated review?

- Yes Likely Unlikely No

If yes or likely does your province/territory intend to take the lead role in your jurisdiction?

- Yes Likely Unlikely No

3. The work plan for production of the 2003 codes presently shows a Coordinated Public Review on the objective-based format building, fire and plumbing codes approximately during the 3rd Quarter of 2002.

Does your province/territory intend to participate in this coordinated review?

- Yes Likely Unlikely No

If yes or likely does your province/territory intend to take the lead role in your jurisdiction?

- Yes Likely Unlikely No

Provincial And Territorial Participation

Recommendation:

That all proposed changes recommended by standing committees, before and after public review, be circulated to the appropriate provincial and territorial departments responsible for building, fire or plumbing regulations. Where there are provincial/territorial concerns, such proposals will not proceed until the issue is resolved by the CCBFC in consultation with the appropriate Provincial/Territorial Advisory Committee.

1. Does your province/territory intend to participate in the consideration of standing committee proposals as described above?

- Yes Likely Unlikely No

Provincial/Territorial Advisory Committee(s).

Recommendation:

That a Provincial/Territorial Advisory Committee be created to provide the CCBFC with advice and guidance on scope, format, process and content of the core codes. Should it not be practical for one body to be created because of jurisdictional difficulties, initially there could be one committee for each of the building, fire and plumbing codes.

1. Does your province/territory intend to participate in the provision of policy advice to the code development system?

- Yes Likely Unlikely No

2. If yes or likely, what would be the most practical arrangement?

- One committee of senior P/T officials dealing with all policy issues for building, plumbing and fire codes.
- Three committees of senior P/T officials dealing with all policy issues, one for each of the building, plumbing and fire codes.
- One committee of senior P/T officials dealing with major policy issues for building, plumbing and fire codes, together with three committees of P/T officials dealing with essentially operational/policy issues for each code(i.e. PTCBS, CRCP, CCFM/FC)

Resolve Present Technical Differences.

Recommendation:

That a joint effort be initiated among code users to examine, and attempt to resolve, the present technical differences among the national and provincial/territorial codes.

1. Does your province/territory intend to participate in the resolution of technical differences among the codes?

- Yes Likely Unlikely No N/A

2. If yes or likely, given resource limitations, what should be the timing of this exercise?

- Major effort to resolve most before next editions.
- Focus on a few key areas only
- Wait until after the 2003 codes are published

Multiple Points Of Entry.

Recommendation:

That proponents recommending changes to the core codes have the choice of submitting these at the provincial/territorial level, or at the national level. All proposals received, regardless of source would be circulated to all the provinces and territories, giving the opportunity for them to raise their concerns and the concerns of provincial/territorial stakeholders at early stages in the process. Where concerns are raised, such proposals will not be dealt with by technical committees until the issue is resolved by the CCBFC in consultation with the appropriate provincial/territorial committee

1. Does your province/territory intend to act as a point of entry to the code development system?
 Yes Likely Unlikely No, leave it to NRC

Urgent Issues and Standards Updating.

Recommendation:

That the four stages of the proposed process would be able to deal with urgent issues, such as health or safety issues, and unreasonable restrictions placed on industry by existing code requirements. Timing, duration and extent of the public consultation may need to be tailored to fit the situation

1. Assuming some form of stakeholder consultation is included, does your province/territory want the code development system to include a “fast track system to deal with “urgent issues?”
- Yes, a National coordinated process
 - Prefer that urgent issues be handled at the P/T level with national to follow
 - A shorter cycle (say 3 years), with the possibility of annual updates for a coordinated process to deal with urgent issues.
 - Other _____

Appendix B

Codes Change Request System Proposal

Current Situation

The current situation with code change requests is characterized by the following:

- ❑ code change requests are submitted to Codes by mail or fax
- ❑ some processing tasks are manual but have the potential to be automated
- ❑ people who submit code change requests can not easily or quickly find out the current status of their request(s)
- ❑ the codes change request process is currently being changed to include provincial and territorial entry points and participation

Objectives

The main objective is to develop an automated tracking system for the Code Development and Review Process. Within this, potential specific objectives are:

- ❑ have the system accessible for all proponents, Provinces and Territories and NRC staff
- ❑ have an on-line codes change request entry form
- ❑ automate the tracking of comments & correspondence concerning the change request
- ❑ automate the maintenance of the proposed change forms and committee review sheets
- ❑ automate the notification of users when status changes, by e-mail or fax
- ❑ have on-line updating and tracking of codes change request status
- ❑ incorporate the functionality, usability and reliability in the system required by stakeholders to conduct their business
- ❑ implement a system that requires little or no training to use

Scope for Solutions

The following will be considered in the implementation of a new system(s):

- ❑ Current standard NRC workstation software: MS-Office, MS-Outlook, MS-Project, Netscape, etc.
- ❑ Some provinces and territories use WordPerfect
- ❑ IRC's Oracle version 8 database software
- ❑ Off-the-shelf software (with some customization/configuration)
- ❑ Internet

Constraints

The following constraints apply:

- ❑ NRC Staff use Windows NT 4.0 workstations
- ❑ The IRC network is Novell version 4.x
- ❑ The NRC Web servers are Netscape Enterprise Servers on UNIX
- ❑ Stakeholders do not have access to the IRC network
- ❑ The system should not unduly increase the burden on Codes staff

Budget

No budget allocated yet. Budget requirements to be determined.

Responsibility

Provincial and Territory representatives (PT Reps) are required to monitor the project and provide feedback. A user group will be needed for prototype testing and system acceptance testing. NRC staff will oversee the prototype and system development.

APPENDIX C

National Research Council of Canada
Provincial/Territorial Committee on Building Standards
Canadian Commission on Building and Fire Codes
Council of Canadian Fire Marshals and Fire Commissioners
Canadian Regulatory Committee on Plumbing

SECOND MEETING OF PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL DEPUTY MINISTERS

February 17, 2000, 9:00h Ottawa

DRAFT Agenda

1. **Welcome and Introductory Remarks**
Chair Dr. Arthur Carty,
President NRC
2. **Review of 1st DM meeting**
To be determined
3. **New Code Development System Update**
Core Codes To be determined
Co-ordinated public review
P/T policy advice and participation
Process for resolution of technical differences
Principle of cost sharing
Code Cycle and Interim revisions
4. **Code Development and Review**
Next Steps To be determined
Discussion
- LUNCH
5. **Objective-Based Codes Update**
Canada's Construction System and The Context for Model Codes To be determined
Review of objectives
process for consultation
Code format
Stakeholder consultation
Communications
Education and training
6. **Objective-Based Codes**
Next Steps To be determined
Discussion
7. **Where to From Here?**
New Agreement/MOU To be determined
• Future Meetings
8. **Adjournment**