

## Editorial

Engineering

October, 2008

# Energy Performance of Buildings in the public sector

It seems that hardly a day goes by at present without hearing news about increasing fuel and energy bills and the response from all sources indicates that we should all be operating more energy efficiently

In 2005, the Kyoto protocol was agreed. The agreement decided upon an aim: “stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous interference with the climate system”.

The outcome was to try to bring the EU countries back to 1992 levels, a saving of 8%. This led to regulation being introduced within the England and Wales called the Energy Performance of Buildings (EPBD) (Certificates and Inspections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007. Scotland and Ireland also have similar new regulations which aim to achieve the same result. Links to this information can be found on our Energy Microsite: [www.allianzengineering.co.uk/energy](http://www.allianzengineering.co.uk/energy).

It is estimated from European research, that 50% of the energy usage in the UK is consumed by the way we heat, light and operate our 25 million buildings. Even small savings here could have an impact on the environment and running costs. Regulation affecting the public sector is Display Energy Certification (DEC). With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008, all buildings occupied in England and Wales, by public authorities or institutions providing a public service to a large number of persons, require Display Energy Certificates. The certificate shows the actual energy consumption of the building and will, over time, show the trends of energy consumption by that building. The regulations place duties upon users of public buildings that are over 1000m<sup>2</sup>, and which are visited by the public, these may include:

- Schools (not private schools)
- Leisure centres (not private clubs)
- Hospitals (not private hospitals unless NHS patients are admitted)
- Libraries
- Museums & Art Galleries
- Public golf clubhouses.

This list is not exhaustive but an indication of buildings that need to be considered. The certificate is valid for 12 months and needs to be displayed in a public area it will always be accompanied by an advisory report which indicates cost effective measures to improve the energy efficiency of the building. This advisory report is valid for seven years.

It is believed that being aware of the potential improvements that can be made to a buildings energy consumption will lead to solutions being sought to save running costs and with ever increasing energy supply costs, the potential savings make the case more pressing. At this time the regulation has placed duties upon landlords for DEC's and Energy Performance Certificates (EPC's), however there are other areas of building energy consumption that should be considered. Air conditioning systems and boilers used for heating are also big energy consumers.

Large air conditioning systems with a calorific cooling output of greater than 250kW will need to be examined for their energy efficiency by early January 2009. An assessment for this type of equipment will need to be completed every five years as required by the EPBD. Boilers, whilst currently excluded from

the certification process, are also able to be assessed for efficiency and this could potentially identify other significant savings for the user of such systems.

So with the 1<sup>st</sup> October implementation date behind us now is the time to act in order to meet your legislative requirements and to help identify the ways to save your energy costs for the future.

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