VIPA International Global Office
188a Avenue de Tervueren, Brussels 1150
Phone: +32 2 761 1681
Mail: VIPA-international@kellencompany.com
Web: www.vipa-international.org

Vacuum Insulation Panel Association
Technical Working Group Video Conference Call
Wednesday 15 April 2020, 15:30 to 17:00 CET

Participants:
Christoph Sprengard, FIW
Hans-Frieder Eberhardt, Porextherm
Justin Davies, Kingspan
Tadej Sekavcnik, Turvac
Flávia Almeida, va-Q-tec
Sebastian Gralla, va-Q-tec
Nicola Brzoska, va-Q-tec
Marko Meglič, Knauf Insulation
Stefaan Van Hoed, Recticel
Kenta Miyamoto, Panasonic
Thomas Heckard, C-Safe
Mark Connell, Kevothermal
Stuart Elliot, Kevothermal
Sebastian Baars, Vaku Isotherm
Raquel Ponte Costa, VIPA International

Apologies:
Kojima Shinya, Panasonic
Yoash Carmi, Avery Dennison Hanita, Technical WG Chair
Estelle Perin, Rexor
Pascal Rousset, Rexor
Jiri Zach, Brno University

MINUTES

1. Welcome

1.1 VIPA International antitrust compliance statement

Raquel opened the conference call and welcomed all participants. She mentioned the needed compliance with the antitrust rules.

1.2 Approval of the agenda

One participant asked to discuss the collaboration with Strips on the sensor for inner pressure measurement. The agenda was approved with this modification

1.3 Approval minutes previous conference call of 28 February 2019 and review of action items

The minutes were approved. All actions were completed.

1.4 Selection chair of the Working Group: 1 year mandate

Raquel explained the position of chair of the WG should rotate among members. Yoash Carmi has acted as a chair for many years now so it would be good to have someone else. Yoash is available to continue as chair if no one else wants to volunteer. Sebastian Baars promised to check internally if someone from his company could be available to take over this role. Raquel invited members to think about this and to inform the office.

Action:
Members to consider the position of chair of the WG.

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2. Update on Avery Dennison Hanita study on the effect of moisture content on the thermal conductivity on different types of fumed silica VIPs and behavior of fiberglass desiccants

In the absence of Yoash, Raquel reported the study is ongoing and it should be completed by the summer. Christoph Sprengard shared with the group that one of his students completed a master thesis on casting of silica powder which included interesting conclusions about distribution of moisture. Christoph will share this with Yoash since this could be of interest to the study that Avery Dennison Hanita is carrying out.

3. Update on standardisation activities in Europe and at ISO level

Tadej explained the CEN TC88 WG11 finalised the changes to the standard, following the comments submitted by the HAS consultant. Comments were all on format and not on content of the standard. The HAS consultant did not provide any feedback on these last modifications. The text will now be submitted to a second formal vote by all national standardisation bodies. Tadej highlighted that the procedures for approval of standards were modified recently so the process and timeframe is not entirely clear to him. Tadej hopes there will be no appeal like AFNOR did last time.

On the ISO side, Raquel shared an update provided by Yoash via email. The ISO group has until September 2020 to finalise the draft according to the ISO rules. Prof Phalguni is finalizing the text and will discuss the getters topic with the Kyoto University. There was a meeting planned for Moscow in September 2020 but it will not take place.

Members discussed that both groups - ISO and CEN – should be in close contact about the content of the standards. The European standard has been modified recently due to the comments of the HAS consultant and the appeal made by AFNOR so it would be useful if Prof Phalguni would have access to the latest text. Raquel explained that circulating the text of draft standards is not allowed by the CEN rules. The response of the CEN group was that ISO should wait for the European standard to be published, which was not very well seen from the ISO side. Since then relations got a bit cold, but Raquel doesn't know if this has changed in the meantime.

Action:
Office to keep members informed about timeframe for voting of EN and ISO standard.

4. New projects:

4.1 Calculation tool/app on energy savings of VIPs in building applications: parameters needed

Christoph Sprengard explained this idea started being discussed at the last board meeting in Munich. As part of the Innovip EU-funded project which some members of the association are part of, a model was developped to calculate the value of VIPs compared to other insulation materials. The model takes into account different variables such as u value, price of energy, rent price, etc. Christph suggests developping a new project for the VIPA members based on this calculation methodology. He suggests extending the parameters and locations as decided by the Board. One possibility would be to turn the methodology into something very practical like an app or a tool that manufacturers could add to their websites so their customers can quickly calculate the return on VIPs compared to other materials.

One member mentioned the building segment is not relevant for his company. Other members welcomed the initiative. Christoph was asked to start by preparing a summary of the calculation methodology developped within the Innovip project together with a proposal on how this could be used by the association. Christoph explained the Innovip project was extended until July so before this date there is nothing that can be published to the public. He will work on the summary after the project is concluded so after July.

One member suggested looking at the Passive House Institute which might have a similar tool but another member explained this tool is only looking at the environmental side. Economic aspects are not taken into account.

Action:

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Christoph Sprengard to prepare summary of the calculation methodology developped in the framework of the EU-funded project Innovip and to include proposals of how this could be turned into an app or tool to calculate the value of VIPs.

4.2 Quality certification scheme for VIPs: RAL, EU Keymark, other?

Raquel explained that the board is reviewing the co-operation agreement with the GSH which was signed back in 2016. In the discussion, the question came up of how many other equivalent quality certification schemes exist for this technology. Members shared some thoughts about certification schemes which relate to processes and procedures like ISO 90001 quality management but it was highlighted that ISO 90001 doesn't test the performance of the product. Members mentioned the closest in the UK would be the BBA (British Board of Agrément) and in the US the ICC International Code Council together with the ASTM. At European level there is also the European Assessment Document issued by the European Technical Assessment.

From the discussion among members, it seems it is just the RAL label that tests the performance of the product but this is only relevant for the German market. It was concluded that only the RAL VIP label defines the product performance but the limitation is that it is known mostly in Germany. There is nothing equivalent at international level. Quality certification turns out to be more a national matter with companies deciding to apply for one scheme depending on their sales strategies and countries of operation. From VIPA's point of view, members discussed that it could be useful to start with a listing of all certification schemes existing. It might be that some organisations still don't have a concrete programme for VIPs so VIPA Intl would then suggest them to create one for instance. All of this will only be possible after a standard is in place either the CEN or the ISO one.

One member suggested looking at the European certification system keymark. This could be a good alternative to an extended system recognized at least in the whole of Europe. For the keymark to be initiated, a standard needs to be in place. One participant asked if an ISO standard could also be used as a basis to initiate the keymark process.

Actions:
- Office to compile a list of certification programmes on construction products.
- Office to check if the ISO standard can be used as a basis to initiate the keymark process.

5. Analysis of Annex 65 reports (https://vipa-international.org/iea-ebc-annex-65-project): which messages/data can be extracted and used for communication purposes?

Raquel mentioned all Annex 65 reports are included in the website of VIPA Intl. She sent a request for a volunteer to extract important messages and conclusions of the report to be used for communication purposes, but received no feedback.
Members discussed that the sustainability report of subtask 4 would not be the best report to use. Some companies have environmental product declarations but that is very specific to the company. The report on the state of art is also not the best one. Members suggested looking at the Subtask 3 Practical Applications – Retrofitting at the Building Scale – Field scale.

Action:
Office to review the subtask 3 report and extract messages to be reviewed by the Technical WG.

6. 2021 EU Strategy for a Sustainable Built Environment https://ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy/pdf/new_circular_economy_action_plan.pdf

6.1 Circularity principles throughout the lifecycle of buildings (recycled content in construction products; improve durability and adaptability of buildings; creation of a digital logbook for buildings)

Due to lack of time this topic was not discussed in detail. Raquel reported that at European level there are some ambitious plans to reduce CO2 emissions in all sectors, buildings included. Now with the coronavirus situation

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it remains to be seen how these ambitious plans will be rolled out. Raquel went through the Circular Economy Action Plan and highlighted the points for the constructions sector. A lot of emphasis is put on manufacturing products with higher amount of recycled content. She asked members how VIPs perform on this regard. Members suggested asking the film producers about recyclability and use of recycled content in film production. The highest value is on the core material so a similar question would have to be asked to fumed silica and fiberglass manufacturers. Overall VIPs perform well on the added value their bring – reduced thickness, lambda value and CO2 savings – but being a relatively new product it is difficult to make it completely circular from the start.

Action:
Office to check with film suppliers about recyclability and use of recycled content in production of film.

7. AoB

Under any other business, members discussed the collaboration with Strips on the inner pressure measurement device they developed. Several member companies have tested the sensor and reader of Strips and were pleased with the results for certain applications. It is not clear why the product was never commercialized by Strips. Hence the idea of suggesting a collaboration with Strips to see where they stand in the development of the product and discuss how to bring it to the market. One participant mentioned that Fraunhofer Institute also worked on developing such a device but that was 10-12 years ago. At the time, the volume was the issue. The trials worked well but the price per unit was still too high.

Raquel explained she will arrange a special session between the board, the technical WG and Strips so they present the status of the product and ideas for collaboration. This session will take place in May. Members agreed with this approach and felt that it was not necessary to contact the Fraunhofer Institute at this stage.

No other item was discussed.

The conference call finished at 17:00.

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