



GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Assumption of working life
of construction products in
Guidelines for European
Technical Approval, European
Technical Approvals and
Harmonized Standards

Guidance Document 002
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This EOTA Guidance Document has been endorsed at the 34th meeting of the EOTA ExCom in December 1999.

The following table gives the working life of construction products to be assumed in Guidelines for European Technical Approval (ETAGs), European Technical Approvals (ETAs) and Harmonized Standards (hENs) depending on assumed working lives of the works (e.g. given by national regulations). It should be noted that, according to the Interpretative Documents, clause 5.2, para 2, the working life of a *product* “cannot be interpreted as a guarantee given by the producer, but regarded only as a means for choosing the right products in relation to the expected economically reasonable working life of the works”. By EOTA (as well as CEN) the assumed working life of a product should be understood as a basic assumption and reference to be considered when laying down the type and severeness of verification methods (e.g. number of freeze-thaw cycles) and provisions relating to “durability”.

When allocating given products to working life categories, the presumptions of the Interpretative Documents, clause 1.3.5, concerning the “economically reasonable working life” (see Annex 1) should be taken into account.

Assumed working life of works (years)		Working life of construction products to be assumed in ETAGs, ETAs and hENs (years)		
Category	Years	Category		
		Repairable or easily replaceable	Repairable or replaceable with some more efforts	Lifelong ²
Short	10	10 ¹	10	10
Medium	25	10 ¹	25	25
Normal	50	10 ¹	25	50
Long	100	10 ¹	25	100
¹ In exceptional and justified cases, e.g. for certain repair products, a working life of 3 to 6 years may be envisaged (when agreed by EOTA TB or CEN respectively). ² When not repairable or replaceable “easily” or “with some more efforts”.				

Annex 1. Explanations

With respect to the assumption of the working life of construction products in harmonized technical specifications, reference is made to the following provisions of the Construction Products Directive and the Interpretative Documents:

- According to the Construction Products Directive *“the products must be suitable for construction works which (as a whole and in their separate parts) are fit for their intended use, account being taken of economy, and in this connection satisfy the following essential requirements where the works are subject to regulations containing such requirements. Such requirements must, subject to normal maintenance, be satisfied for an economically reasonable working life”* [1]
- **“Maintenance”** is defined in the Interpretative Documents as *“a set of preventive and other measures which are applied to the works in order to enable the works to fulfil all its functions during its working life”* [2]
- **“Normal Maintenance”** according to the Interpretative Documents *“includes inspections and occurs at a time when the costs of the intervention which has to be made are not disproportionate to the value of the part of the works concerned, consequential costs being taken into account”* [3]
- The **“working life”** is defined in the Interpretative Documents as *“the period of time during which the performance of the works will be maintained at a level compatible with the fulfilment of the Essential Requirements”* [4]
- **“Economically reasonable working life”** according to the Interpretative Documents *“presumes that all relevant aspects are taken into account such as: costs of design, construction and use; costs arising from hindrance of use; risks and consequences of failure of the works during its working life and costs of insurance covering these risks; planned partial renewal; costs of inspections, maintenance, care and repair; costs of operation and administration; disposal; environmental aspects”* [5]
- The Interpretative Documents provide that it is up to the Member States *“when and where they feel it necessary, to take measures concerning the working life which can be reasonable for each type of works, or for some of them, or for parts of the works, in relation to the satisfaction of the essential requirements”* [6]
- Furthermore the Interpretative Documents provide that category B specifications and guidelines for European technical approval *“should include indications concerning the working life of the products in relation to the intended uses and the methods for its assessment”* [7].

REFERENCES

- 1 Construction Products Directive, preamble of Annex I, first and second sentence
- 2 Interpretative Documents, clause 1.3.3, para 1, first sentence
- 3 Interpretative Documents, clause 1.3.3, para 2
- 4 Interpretative Documents, clause 1.3.5, para 1
- 5 Interpretative Documents, clause 1.3.5, para 2
- 6 Interpretative Documents, clause 5.1, para 1
- 7 Interpretative Documents, clause 5.2, para 1