

# FIS Operable Wall working group

Meeting notes and actions 29 3 22

This was a virtual meeting  
Members were reminded through the agenda and at the outset of the meeting to agree to conform to FIS policy to comply with the Competition Act 1998.

The meeting was convened and held in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association of FIS and the regulations made by the Association. The Association has in place procedures to ensure compliance with all relevant competition laws and the meeting is subject to those procedures.

<p>Julian Sargent welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed that the meeting is held in accordance with the competition act.</p>	
<p><b>Papers referred to during the meeting include</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Code for construction Products information (CCPI) will help organisations drive higher standards in the presentation of construction product information, prioritising building safety. <a href="#">About - Code for Construction Product Information (cpicode.org.uk)</a></li> <li>- BSI Identify The revolutionary digital identification service that improves industry safety by solving the product traceability challenge. <a href="#">BSI Identify - Home (bsigroup.com)</a></li> <li>- FIS are contributing to two working groups looking at <a href="#">Competence (constructionproducts.org.uk)</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">Building Safety Bill - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a> is currently going through Parliament and it will have a profound impact on how buildings are designed and constructed, including the design responsibility and retrospective liability through an extended Defective premises Act <a href="#">Retrospective extension of limitation period under the Defective Premises Act to be extended to 30 years - 4 Pump Court - Barristers' Chambers</a></li> <li>- Beware becoming <a href="#">The unintentional designer - SpecFinish magazine</a></li> <li>- Fire performance: <a href="#">The four C's</a> provides a process to ensure that the products and systems being designed for the project have evidence of compliance relating to the specific detailing and interfaces.</li> </ul> <p>The following guides are here for you to read in advance of the meeting and may be referenced in the discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Installation of Partitioning <a href="#">HERE</a></li> <li>▪ Site Guide Partitioning <a href="#">HERE</a></li> <li>▪ Site Guide to glazed partitions <a href="#">HERE</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Using Partitioning and Ironmongery to Help Manage Social Distancing - FIS (thefis.org)</a></li> <li>▪ Servicing Operable walls <a href="#">HERE</a></li> <li>▪ All our technical guides can be seen <a href="#">HERE</a></li> <li>▪ The Competency Framework Career and Qualification Path <a href="#">HERE</a></li> <li>▪ Apprentice guide for employers <a href="#">HERE</a></li> </ul>	

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## Update on key activities and projects

### Specifiers guide to Partitions

Joe confirmed that the drafting of the Specifiers Guide to Partitioning has been completed and that members are invited to submit hero images that can be used in the guide no later than 5 April to Clair Mooney.

The amendments regarding moveable walls have been incorporated in the draft.

It was agreed to leave the group name as operable walls.

There was an accident in America where a janitor bypassed a safety device on a fully automatic operable wall resulting in a fatality. JS to provide some background so that we can issue an Industry Alert

The guide will be launched early in the summer and members can have a unique pdf copy of guide incorporating their logo alongside FIS for a one-off fee of £500

The group asked about the possibility of a future more detailed operable wall only specifiers guide that also deals with maintenance. It was suggested that this section may be possible to be pulled out as an extract that can be downloaded separately and we could focus specific feature articles on operable walls that will help to promote the guide.

### FIS Vetting

James Parlour is looking at how the current FIS vetting process can be reviewed to add value to supplier members and contractors.

#### FIS Vetting Review Objectives

- Include suppliers and manufacturers
- A more robust and holistic process based on risk
- Align with PQQ and 3rd party accreditations
- Integrate & build awareness of FIS tools & guides
- Formalise the FIS code of conduct
- Increase pride and value in membership

Assurance provided that different levels of risk in vetting will not be used to create a tier system for members.

Julian noted that c82 members of FIS are involved with selling operable walls. IMC confirmed that he is working through a list of suppliers in the UK and will personally invite them to the next meeting.

Two suggestions were made for addition to vetting criteria if not already included:

- Consistency and transparency of product offered in the supply chain, i.e. does the client get a different product from advertised based upon cost and availability.

Please send any high-quality images of partitioning to [clairmooney@theFis.org](mailto:clairmooney@theFis.org) no later than 5 April

Members interested in having unique pdf copy of guide should contact [joecilia@theFIS.org](mailto:joecilia@theFIS.org)

Members interested in working on specifiers guide for Operable walls should email [joecilia@thefis.org](mailto:joecilia@thefis.org)

James is looking for interested members to join a round table discussion in the spring to explore our early thoughts and help to develop any changes.

Please contact James directly to register your interest at [JamesParlour@thefis.org](mailto:JamesParlour@thefis.org)

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ethical supply chains regarding country of origin.</li> </ul> <p><b>Common concerns and discussion points</b></p> <p>The proposed extended liability period in Defective premises Act</p> <p>Iain McIlwee introduced the Building Safety Bill and re-iterated concerns about the Defective Premises Act. The Secretary of State for The Department Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Michael Gove has stated that he is looking to industry to make up the expected shortfall between the Governments contribution and the actual costs of cladding replacement on buildings between 11 and 18m. Iain McIlwee discussed the possible implications of a levy to address a shortfall in the cost to remediate cladding and other building safety issues making buildings uninhabitable. The retrospective liability in the Building Safety Bill has been reset to 30 years as presented.</p> <p>Clarity given the fact it may have been deemed compliant with the Building Regulations at the time to may not be mitigation and the Act would supersede any pre-existing contractual, warranty or insurance periods.</p>	
<p><b>Design responsibility and meeting the requests form the SER in Scotland</b></p> <p>Robert Jopling Chairman - Scottish Registration Board Structural Engineers Registration Ltd joined the meeting</p> <p>His presentation (attached) was to address two points What is SER and why does it affect you?</p> <p>Discussion highlighted challenges in inconsistency in application of the process. Discussion focussed on contractual considerations (I.e. adopting a common approach at procurement so additional time and cost required if further information is requested by the certifier is managed as a an additional claimable event and also the practical side related to the importance of ensuring that considerations are made for key aspects and ensuring that design detailing is completed earlier in the pre-construction phase. Robert acknowledged that the process and inconsistency can put undue pressures on manufacturers and noted the importance of managing additional costs of providing information as the contractor may decide to provide the calculations using their own structural engineers. It was noted that some of the challenges were related to problems around the SER process and <u>E</u>could be avoided if more emphasis given to design detailing in the procurement and pre-construction phases. IM presented in outline a questionnaire that he had pulled together with PS looking at procurement process and common problems, it was agreed that sharing</p>	<p>IM to circulate procurement questionnaire</p>

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<p>this could be a useful intervention. IM to tidy questionnaire and circulate to attendees to test before circulating to the wider sector for completion. SER representatives agreed that they would be happy to provide comment too. Beyond the data that could support it was agreed this would be a useful tool to engage the wider sector and help to promote e.g. the specifiers guide.</p>	
<p><b>Acoustic Verification Scheme</b> Iain confirmed that NBS are now referencing the scheme in NBS Chorus and are working to include it as searchable link in NBS Source He will be working with the Association of Acoustic Consultants (ANC) to raise awareness to their members.</p> <p><b>SFG20</b></p> <p>The meeting addressed the outstanding questions</p> <p>Is a 12-monthly service visit the standard maintenance frequency across the industry, or does it vary depending on the type of system? <u>12 months is a common maintenance cycle. However, users should always refer to manufacturer/supplier instructions. Some manufacturers may suggest a service interval based on a pre-determined number of openings or a defined period, whichever is soonest. Failure to service the wall correctly could invalidate any system warranty provided.</u></p> <p>In your opinion would a 12-monthly service visit be sufficient to comply with current legislation such as The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998? <u>For most systems YES. However, users should always refer to manufacturer/supplier instructions. Some manufacturers may suggest a service interval based on a pre-determined number of openings or a defined period, whichever is soonest. Fully electric systems will be required to meet Electrical Safety Standards and may require more regular attendance, this should again be explicit in the system O&amp;M instructions.</u> <u>Julian offered to produce wording relevant to fully electric walls.</u></p> <p>Are there any additional checks or inspections that should be done by the facility manager or their staff as part of the general building maintenance? <u>Yes, staff should report any operating difficulties and carry out a visual inspection when moving the wall, reporting any visual damage, difficulties in moving panels, damage to the track or cracks in the surrounding area to the responsible person.</u> <u>Iain suggested a small group produce and publish a short (5 point?) checklist.</u></p>	

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<p>Is 60 minutes a realistic estimate of the time taken to perform a 12-monthly service visit, or do the systems vary so much that it is impossible to give an average figure?</p> <p><u>It is not possible to give an accurate figure, there are too many variables. It is vital to ensure that the service engineer is competent, trained and familiar with the system and due Consideration is given to the erection and usage of suitable access equipment to undertake the works. In addition to safety considerations, failure to service the wall correctly could invalidate any system warranty provided.</u></p> <p>Are there any maintenance checks that need to be done for automatic or semi-automatic systems that specifically require an electrician, rather than a service engineer?</p> <p><u>The service engineer should be equipped and competent to manage any related service issues. To ensure safety, it is essential that the system O&amp;M is reviewed and any electrical control box should only ever be opened by a competent, service engineer suitably trained and knowledgeable on the installed system otherwise there is a risk of electrocution.</u></p> <p>Are pass doors fire-rated? If so, are they subject to the statutory 6-monthly fire door inspection which is specified in BS 9999: 2017?</p> <p><u>If the operable wall is fire rated, the inspection requirement should be reviewed as part of the Fire Risk Assessment. If the operable wall includes pass-doors again users should refer to the system O&amp;M for inspection requirements and default to their fire risk assessment for advice on inspecting pass-doors as part of their regular fire door inspection process to ensure compliant with BS999:2017.</u></p> <p>Do automatic and semi-automatic operable walls have a safety device such as an anti-crush system, similar to those used in a powered/automated gate or door?</p> <p><u>Yes. Users should refer to manufacturers' instructions. Fully automatic walls should have 2 stage safety systems. Semi-automatic walls should have 1 stage safety systems.</u></p> <p>After a final confirmation these will be passed to SFG20 for publication</p>	
<p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <p>Flavie confirmed that FIS now have a consolidated sustainability plan which is available on the <a href="#">FIS Sustainability Hub</a></p> <p>Meetings are scheduled every 6- 8 weeks. Contact Flavie if you are interested.</p> <p>One of the topics of interest is around a reuse initiative. A meeting was held in February with 15 tier 1 contractors to discuss the concept which was widely seen as very positive.</p> <p>One point that was discussed is that reused products could be sold at the same price as new products. There is an important role for manufacturers to play in this important agenda. One action that was taken from this first meeting was to identify suitable products. Operable</p>	<p>Please let FIS know who is responsible for Sustainability with their organisations by emailing <a href="mailto:flavielowres@thefis.org">flavielowres@thefis.org</a> so we can plug them in to work.</p>

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<p>partitions could have potential for reuse – this was echoed by the operable partition group.</p>	
<p><b>Events</b>  Members were reminded of the events taking place this year  Regional meetings</p> <p><a href="#">FIS Regional Meeting - 5 April, Bristol - FIS (thefis.org)</a>  <a href="#">FIS Regional Meeting - 26 April, Dartford - FIS (thefis.org)</a>  <a href="#">FIS Regional Meeting - 10 May, Manchester - FIS (thefis.org)</a>  <a href="#">FIS Regional Meeting - 11 May, Scotland - FIS (thefis.org)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Awards lunch</a> 9 June Royal Lancaster Hotel London</p> <p><a href="#">Scottish Awards</a> 16 September InterContinental Edinburgh the George, George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2PB</p> <p><a href="#">Training awards</a> 22 November Plaisterers Hall, One London Wall, London EC2Y 5JU</p> <p>And the <a href="#">Workplace Design Show</a> that will take place between 27th &amp; 28th February 2023 at Business Design Centre, London, where FIS will be holding a technical briefing and members are invited to exhibit and take part.</p> <p>All FIS meetings webinars and events can be found <a href="#">HERE</a></p>	
<p><b>AOB</b>  None advised in advance, so nothing discussed</p>	
<p><b>Date and time of next meeting</b>  Julian thanked everyone for a great debate and Robert and Mark for helping to clarify SER</p> <p>The next meeting will be held at Atrium on 12 October 2022</p> <p><b>To register please follow this link</b> <a href="#">Events - FIS (thefis.org)</a></p>	