



Special points of interest:

- **The IBCI host the next meeting of the CEBC in Dublin in May. (See Report on Page 3.)**
- **The IBCI is scheduling a one-day seminar to be held in Tullamore next September. Details of the programme and venue will be published in the next edition.**

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Fire Service “New Deal”, but what about Building Control?

A press release on the website of the Department of the Environment and Local Government reports that the Minister has announced the publication of the Farrell Grant Sparks report entitled “*Review of Fire Safety and Fire Services in Ireland*”.

The report is the output from the review of the fire service commissioned by the Minister early last year. The press release headlined “New Deal for the Fire Service” quotes the Minister as saying, “*My first priority will be to move towards implementation of the recommendations which fall under the sole ambit of my Department and to consider how best to finance them*”.

The main recommendation of the report is the establishment of a new body called the National Fire and Civil Protection/Emergency Services Authority to unify the various groups that deal with fire safety in the state. But what does all this

mean for Building Control?

In their report, the consultants recommend that “the building control regime should transfer to the new Fire and Civil Protection/Emergency Services Authority as part of its critical safety remit”. It envisages that all Parts, A to M, should be implemented by them through local Fire and Civil Protection/Emergency authorities.

The report also suggests there should be what they describe as “greater flexibility” in recruitment to a new Building Control Officer grade. The consultants don’t expand on what they mean by this, but the reporting structure shown suggests that the implementation of Building Control will be carried out largely by non-professional staff.

When the draft report first appeared, the IBCI Council questioned its contents in letters to both the Minister and the consultants. Apart from a short acknowledgement from the

Minister’s office, however, no responses were received.

The IBCI Council felt that the consultants did not fully understand the building control system. It appeared they had only consulted with those who deal solely with fire safety certification, forgetting about those who deal with the other eleven parts.

Building Control has often been described as the “Cinderella” of the Local Authority services. The apparent lack of consultation with building control staff during this review just seems to reinforce this position.

The IBCI have always felt that Building Control should be strengthened in its own right. It now seems that instead of getting the recognition it deserves, Building Control is to be further relegated to being “tacked onto” another service that is primarily concerned with duties other than controlling the design and construction of buildings.

Minister Announces Appointments to New Building Regulations Advisory Body

The Building Regulations Advisory Body (BRAB) was established in 1992 for the purpose of advising the Minister on matters pertaining to the Building Regulations. Members are appointed by the Minister for a period of five years.

The Minister for the Environment and Local Government, Noel Dempsey, T.D., recently announced his appointments for the next five years with effect from 1st January, 2002.

The list of appointees are:

- Prof. J. Owen Lewis (Chairman)
- Mr. Paul Kelly
- Ms. Maria Melia
- Ms. Anne Mills
- Ms. Patsy Supple

- Ms. Ann McGuinness
- Ms. Sarah Devitt
- Mr. Johnny McGettigan
- Mr. John Purcell
- Mr. Eoin O'Cofaigh
- Ms. Krystyna Rawicz
- Mr. Ian Lumley
- Ms. Denise Germaine
- Mr. John McCarthy
- Dr. Eugene Farrell
- Ms. Niamh O'Doherty
- Mr. Michael McCarthy
- Mr. Pat Minogue

The list includes the immediate past president of the IBCI, Johnny McGettigan, and the Council of the Institute extended its congratulations to him on his appointment at their March meeting.

It looks like being a busy time for the new BRAB members. One of their first tasks will be overseeing the introduction of a revised Technical Guidance Document for Part L - Conservation of Fuel and Energy, expected to come into operation this year. It is also rumoured that Part A - Structure will be extended to include repairs and renewals.

The new BRAB will also have to consider the impact of the implementation of the recommendations regarding Building Control contained in the Farrell Grant Sparks report entitled *"Review of Fire Safety and Fire Services in Ireland"*. (See Page 1.)

The IBCI Council wish them all well in their endeavours.

A Tribute to the late Rosaleen Gallagher

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Rosaleen Gallagher who died suddenly on 9th January 2002. Rosaleen was a member of the Building Regulations Advisory Body (BRAB) and attended the IBCI conference for the last number of years.

Nominated by the Tánaiste, Ms. Mary Harney T.D, Rosaleen was appointed to BRAB in 1998 as a representative of the Central Remedial Clinic. During her tenure, Part M of the Building Regulations: Access for People with Disabilities was revised to include provisions requiring that all dwellings be made visitable by people with

disabilities. As both a BRAB member and a wheelchair user, Rosaleen made a significant and worthwhile contribution to that work. It was a sign of her commitment to that work that shortly before her untimely death she had indicated her willingness to serve on BRAB for a further five years.

Despite being a wheelchair user, Rosaleen lead a very active life. As well as being a member of BRAB, Rosaleen was on the executive council of the Wheelchair Association. She was an advisor to the Presidents Award Committee on disabled people and was also very active in organising games

and activities for disabled people both young and old. Rosaleen also shone in the sports arena having won gold and silver medals for Ireland in the International Wheelchair Games. These achievements brought her the further distinction of being the first lady to be selected as "Mayo Person of the Year" followed by "Mayo Sports Person of the Year" a few years later.

Rosaleen inspired many throughout her life. She was an extraordinary person who worked tirelessly for the betterment of all, particularly persons with disabilities. She was an example to all of us. May she rest in peace.

Compliance of Dwellings with the Requirements of Part M

In a recent circular letter, the Department of the Environment and Local Government requested that each Building Control Authority report to them on the compliance of dwellings with Part M when returning their statistics for the first half of the current year.

It appears that the Department's Housing Inspectorate are concerned that builders and developers are displaying, what they describe as, "less than the full understanding/awareness of the requirements of the new Part M".

The letter conveys the Minister's request to Building Control Officers that they pay particular attention to the requirements of Part M while carrying out inspections. It also asks staff to ensure that, insofar as is practicable, local builders are aware of the new requirements in regard to both private and local authority housing.

The circular letter asks that "the outcome of Part M compliance inspections be the subject of a concise covering report when the building control authority is submitting

enforcement statistics for the first half of 2002".

Regular readers of the IBCI News will be aware that this topic has received much attention in past editions. Problems arising from both non-compliant dwelling designs and on-site practices were highlighted in the last two issues along with a two-page summary of the relevant requirements having been featured in March 2001.

The results of this nationwide exercise will no doubt make interesting reading.

Consortium of European Building Control to meet in Dublin

The Consortium of European Building Control (CEBC) will hold its next meeting in Dublin in May. The meeting is being hosted by the IBCI, the only Irish body to hold membership of the Consortium.

The CEBC currently have members representing thirteen nations across Europe. Meetings are held twice a

year with venues rotating between the member nations.

The Dublin meeting will take place from 12th to 14th May. The theme of the meeting is "Energy Efficiency in Buildings", a topic of concern for everyone involved in the design and construction of buildings at present.

Given the current interest in the revisions to the Irish guidance in this area, it will be of particular interest to the IBCI delegates to hear what is happening in regard to energy efficiency in the other member nations at this time.

A report on the Dublin meeting will be featured in the next issue of the IBCI News.

Reminder on Winders

To help clear up their position on the use of winders in domestic stairs, the Department of the Environment and Local Government issued a circular letter in January outlining their endorsement of the advice given in the BS 5395:2000.

The revised BS 5395 was issued in June 2000 under the title, "Code of Practice for the Design, Construc-

tion and Maintenance of Straight Stairs and Winders". The letter quotes the standard as saying, "The varying thread width of a winder can cause people to misjudge distances and can lead to falls. For this reason, the use of winders should be avoided. If it is necessary to use them, they should preferably be situated at the bottom of the flight."

This guidance is also included in HA1 Explanatory Memorandum for New House Grants (First Time Purchasers).

The circular letter also indicated the DoELG's intention to revise Technical Guidance Document K: Stairways, Ramps and Guards. The use of winders in stairs will no doubt be clarified in the revised TGD.

Reminder

**Membership subscriptions for 2002 are now due.
If you haven't paid yet, please forward your payment as soon as possible.**

If you are not a member and would like to join, contact the IBCI at PO Box 3667, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.

IBCI Conference Letterkenny Trade Show Participants

Some of those who attended the IBCI Conference in Letterkenny have requested that we publish a list of the trade exhibitors and their contact addresses.

As a "thank you" to all those who took part in the exhibition and in recognition of their contribution to the success of the event, we are more than happy to oblige.

The companies involved were:

Biocycle Ltd.
107 Grange Road,
Baldoyle Industrial Estate,
Dublin 13.

Bord na Mona Environmental Ltd.
Main Street,
Newbridge,
Co. Kildare.

Construct and Build Ltd.
Level 2 Rosemount Complex,
65 Rosemount Avenue,
Derry BT48 0LD.

Creagh Concrete Products Ltd.
Homespan Sales,
Black Park Road,
Toomebridge,
Co. Antrim BT41 3SE
FAS

Environmental Training Unit,
P.O. Box 456,
27/33 Upper Baggot Street,
Dublin 4.

Gypsum Industries Ltd.
Clonskeagh Road,
Dublin 14.

Home Ventilation (Ireland) Ltd.
C & S Hunter Group,
6 Flush Park Industrial Estate,
Lisburn,
Co. Antrim BT28 2DX

Kingspan Insulation Ltd.
Bree Industrial Estate,
Castleblayney,
Co. Monaghan.

MMS Medical Ltd.
Forge Hill Cross,
Kinsale Road,
Cork.

Necoflex Ltd.
6 Kilcoole Industrial Estate,
Kilcoole,
Greystones,
Co. Wicklow.

Radon Supplies Ltd.
Unit 6 Carrick-on-Shannon Busi-

**IRISH BUILDING
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If you would like to contribute an article to the IBCI Newsletter, or comment on anything contained in this issue, please write to:

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Carrick-on-Shannon,
Co. Leitrim.

Richmond Building Products Ltd.
Unit 27/28 Westlink Estate,
Kilemore Road,
Dublin 10.

Roulston and McLoughlin
McCay Court,
Castlederg,
Co. Tyrone BT81 7AT

Thank you to all who took part. We hope you found the exhibition beneficial and wish you success in your business in the future.