

FECS & CEIR JOINT STATEMENT on Building Information Modeling (BIM)

Brussels, 11 May 2016

CEIR, the European association for the taps and valves industry representing sanitary, building and industrial valve manufacturers

and

FECS, the European Sanitaryware Producers Federation, representing and promoting the interests of the ceramic sanitaryware industry at European level

- recognise the growing need for sustainable buildings in both new build and refurbishment projects
- recognise that Industry needs cohesive tools to aid manufacturers.

The CEIR and FECS Boards identified that manufacturers must play a pivotal role in the ongoing development of an acceptable cross-country harmonised Building Information Modeling (BIM) system and therefore agreed to work together to achieve this goal.

BIM is a methodology based on the use of coordinated, coherent and computable information about the physical and functional characteristics of a building or infrastructure. BIM systems address and record the core principles of the full life cycle of the building: design, in use and dismantle.

The BIM goal is to establish a reliable knowledge base for decision-making throughout the entire life cycle of the building.

Furthermore, BIM repositions the construction industry from an opaque environment to a more collaborative one, where manufacturers' BIM components compound other stakeholders' BIM models and where the different stakeholders' specialised tools benefit from information about BIM components.

Therefore, CEIR and FECS believe that ensuring the quality of BIM components is important because:

- BIM users trust the information contained in BIM components provided by manufacturers
- Wrong BIM components in the cloud/internet may create misleading information that could have legal consequences (if the metadata included in the BIM components leads to mistakes).

BIM is spreading fast but it is still 'under construction' in several fields, especially with regard to metadata definition and the legal and liability issue. Therefore, CEIR and FECS members wish to state their concerns about BIM and its development.

Product Information

One of the current open points is the development of the semantics for BIM construction products based on harmonised standards.

Currently there is no common template across Europe stating which information a BIM object needs to provide, and this is causing confusion and inefficiencies in our Industry.

As an example, CIBSE (the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers) is working on a product template for the United Kingdom that could be referenced for the whole of Europe, but CIBSE is not alone

in developing a template proposal for BIM objects. Many other countries are developing different templates, causing greater confusion.

The obvious risk is that we all end up with different standards for different countries and for different categories, and therefore do not conform to the European Commission idea of one platform acceptable to all.

CEIR and FECS believe that the Industry needs to be aware of the templates that are under development in the various countries and, when necessary, must strongly voice its opinion before it is too late, especially considering that the EU has finally taken action and launched the new CEN/TC 442 for BIM standardisation.

The scope of CEN/TC 442 will cover standardisation in the field of structured semantic life cycle information for the built environment. The Committee will develop a structured set of standards, specifications and reports which specify methodologies to define, describe, exchange, monitor, record and securely handle asset data, semantics and processes with links to geospatial and other external data.

The working groups within CEN/TC 442 already established are:

- WG1 Strategy and planning (secretariat: United Kingdom)
- WG2 Exchange information (secretariat: Germany)
- WG3 Information delivery specification (secretariat: Austria)
- WG4 Data dictionary (secretariat: France)

CEIR has been invited to become a liaison committee to CEN/TC 442. This is a good opportunity for CEIR and FECS to find out what is going on with regard to Product Information so our Industry can have a say before decisions are made.

Liability Issues

As stated above, BIM users trust information on BIM components provided by manufacturers. Wrong BIM components in the cloud or on the internet may create misleading information that could affect the planning, construction, safety, consumption, performance and economics of a building, and this could have legal consequences (if the metadata included in the BIM components leads to mistakes).

Manufacturers must ensure that BIM information is accurate and that all stakeholders understand that this information is linked to the product life cycle and not to the building life cycle.

How to address this important question should be a priority, and therefore a call for action, for both the CEIR and FECS.

About CEIR

The European Association for the Taps and Valves Industry (CEIR) was formed in 1959 as the European federation of national manufacturer associations. CEIR gathers together a large number of European manufacturers in the field of valves and fittings. CEIR supports the principles of a free economy and private enterprise in Europe as well as on a global basis. CEIR represents the common economic, technical and scientific interests of the European valve industries, in particular towards international authorities and economic and commercial circles.

About FECS

Established in Geneva in 1954, the European Sanitaryware Producers Federation (FECS) promotes the interests of the ceramic sanitaryware industry in Europe. Today it represents seven national trade associations and companies from the European Union, Turkey and Switzerland. FECS directly employs approximately 22,000 people and has an annual turnover of € 4.5 billion.