Concerns are voiced over EU’s construction products rules

Standardisation and market surveillance “at risk of going off track”, according to Construction Products Europe and FiEC

European standardisation and market surveillance is at risk of going off track, according to manufacturers’ and contractors’ associations who are looking to highlight the measures in the Construction Products Regulation (CPR) that should be improved.

Construction Products Europe and FiEC (the European Construction Industry Federation) are voicing concerns over the CPR, which lays down harmonised rules for the marketing of construction products in the EU.

The members of Construction Products Europe manufacture components that members of FiEC – representing micro, small, medium and large contractors - install, and they defend the interests of the sectors in the construction value chain.

These two interdependent sectors and the two European associations that represent them have joined forces to point out those aspects of the CPR that they say should be improved for the benefit of both sectors.

Both associations said they supported an open and transparent European standardisation system that involved all concerned parties. They said they welcomed European measures that created a level playing field and ensured that the right product was used in the right circumstances in buildings and infrastructure.

On the other hand, they felt the CPR was influencing the development of standards in a way that neither of these goals was achieved.

In spite of the fact that the legal instrument governing the placing of construction products on the market is a regulation, with direct effect in the Member States, both EU associations are concerned that the actual implementation is not consistent and there appears to be wide interpretation of the CPR.

They added that to make matters worse, the surveillance authorities in Member States lacked resources and were unable to meet the demands of their tasks.

Italian trade bodies flag emissions failings

Emissions limitation regulations have not been adopted by all local authorities in Italy, according to Italian trade associations Unacea and Ascosac, meaning that obsolete machines can still be used.

Unacea, the Italian construction equipment association, and Ascosac, the national machinery trade federation, said that over the past 15 years, with the development of the EU rules, the construction equipment industry had produced machines that had cut more than 95% of particulate matter emitted.

They said this figure stood out in a position paper entitled Mission: More Emissions (Mission Fewer Emissions), which has been produced by the two associations.

According to the paper, investment and industry design efforts have not led to the expected benefits in terms of air and environment quality.

They said that local authorities had not adopted limitation measures for the more obsolete machines. They added that at present, in Italy, there were towns where all machines could always operate, while other towns considered the machines’ pollutants, whatever engine stage was equipped.

Ruggero Riva, president of Ascosac, said, “We are dealing with a paradox. In this way, there are no incentives for those entrepreneurs who use machines of the most recent generations.”

Paolo Venturi, president of Unacea, said, “It is a nonsense that Italy has to be fined for exceeding the pollution limits, and at the same time we do not exploit the possibilities provided by the technological advancement to cut emissions.”

New focus for next Intermat

A special focus on France, Africa and the Middle East is promised alongside the traditional international flavour of Intermat 2018, the construction equipment show held in Paris, France, every three years.

Intermat 2018, which will be held between 23 and 28 April, 2018, will also have a new layout. Hall 7 will no longer be used but Halls 3 and 4, which weren’t used last time, will come into play. This will inevitably result in some exhibitors being moved from their 2015 position.

The show will be split into four main sectors – Earthmoving & Demolition, Road, Mineral & Foundations, Lifting & Transportation, and Buildings & Concrete Industry.

This final section will include the World of Concrete Europe event which will be running again.

The Demo Area to the east of the showground area will be retained, as will the main outdoor areas to the east of Hall 5 and to the east of Hall 6.