ETA – a reliable way to CE marking for construction products
EOTA – a competent partner for the construction industry

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What is a European Technical Assessment (ETA)?

- Independent Europe-wide assessment of the essential performance characteristics of a construction product
- Legal basis: Regulation (EU) No 305/2011, called 'Construction Products Regulation' or 'CPR'
- Assessment carried out by independent Technical Assessment Bodies which have been appointed by their Member States.

Why is it important?

- The European Technical Assessment (ETA) provides an alternative route to CE marking when there is no harmonised European standard. This is especially important for:
  - innovative construction products
  - construction products for which the development of a harmonised standard is not an option
- The ETA procedure is an important tool for promoting the free movement of non standardised construction products.
- The ETA offers in addition to the EAD and DoP product characteristics, technical drawings and other important product data that are given in one tailor made document which is well accepted by contractors and building authorities.
Quick access to the internal market via the ETA route

The basis – European Assessment Documents (EADs)

- The European Technical Assessment (ETA) is based on a harmonised technical specification called European Assessment Document (EAD).
- EADs offer many advantages in comparison to harmonised standards (hEN)
  - EADs can be developed in parallel to the product and specifically for the product (tailor-made specification).
  - The manufacturer is involved in the development of the EAD.
  - Development is kept confidential upon request of the manufacturer; cooperation with associations is also possible.
  - The EAD is developed by a group of experts with extensive technical expertise and detailed knowledge of the regulatory requirements for construction works in their countries.
  - No European Commission mandate needed (EAD development can start straight away.)
The basis – European Assessment Documents (EADs)

- Further advantages
  - The process is quick and there are clear timelines.
  - Adopting the EAD/ETA route is an option and opportunity and not an obligation (like with hEN).
  - The EAD procedure is free of charge for the manufacturer.
  - EADs are adjusted on basis of feedback from issued ETAs
  - Assessment of construction products by TABs according to EADs is coordinated under the umbrella of one organization with the well established brand name EOTA
  - The large number of EADs cited or adopted so far and under development underlines the interest of manufacturers in the EOTA route.
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The European Organisation for Technical Assessment

- Founded in 1990 as European Organisation for Technical Approvals
- Since 2013: European Organisation for Technical Assessment
- Permanent Secretariat in Brussels
- EOTA brings together the Technical Assessment Bodies entitled to issue ETAs and relevant stakeholders
- Currently, EOTA has 52 members from 25 countries
- The EOTA members have extensive experience and expert knowledge to elaborate assessment methods for innovative and for non standardised construction products
- The brand name EOTA is well established Europe- and worldwide
- The construction sector and the building authorities have a high level of confidence in Technical Assessments issued by EOTA members
Main tasks
EOTA plays a key role in the EAD/ETA procedure. Its main tasks are to:

- co-ordinate the Technical Assessment Bodies
- develop and adopt European Assessment Documents (EADs)
- support members in preparing and issuing European Technical Assessments (ETAs)
- Promote the exchange of best practices to increase efficiency and provide a better service to the industry

Main tasks (continued)
- make adopted EADs and references to ETAs publicly available
- inform the European Commission and the Standing Committee for Construction of any questions related to the preparation of EADs and suggest improvements
- ensure cooperation and consultation with other stakeholders
Further objectives of EOTA

- facilitate innovation
- promote the free movement of construction products
- foster harmonisation of technical specifications across Europe
- boost the competitiveness of the European construction sector
- help manufacturers, especially small and medium enterprises, bring their product(s) to the internal market.

EOTA – additional services to the construction industry

- EOTA also develops technical specifications, called Technical Reports or TR, e.g.
  - to address issues related to design with regard to ETA assessed construction products at a European level (since design aspects cannot be treated in the ETA.)
  - to provide horizontal test and assessment methods for several products or product groups which can be referred to in the EADs.
In short

- Manufacturers usually do not liaise with EOTA directly, but with a Technical Assessment Body (TAB) of their choice.
- However, EOTA is key to making the EAD and ETA procedures and therefore the CPR work!
- EOTA and its members are very committed to constantly improving the EAD and ETA procedures, especially through
  - improved coordination with the European Commission to streamline the EAD development process and reduce times-to-market for manufacturers
  - optimised exchange of information between TABs
  - providing complementary services to manufacturers and product users
  - directly speaking to stakeholders and listening to them.
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According to a study by the European Commission ...

- The benefits of requesting an ETA far outweigh its costs
- Manufacturers, who have obtained an ETA, would do so again!
- The ETA procedure is not more onerous than CE marking in accordance with a harmonised standard
- The ETA route accessible to small and medium enterprises (SMEs), further improvements planned
- CE marking helps boost product sales.

Source: DIBt, Berlin
Advantages of an ETA

- ETA is the only tailor-made assessment procedure available for construction products that offers access to the entire internal market.
- Objective, independent assessment ensures the trust of customers.
- Harmonised declaration of product performance ensures transparency and fair competition.
- AVCP systems comparable to the ones under harmonised standards guarantee constancy of product performance.
- Assessment procedure often leads to product optimisation.
- Improved company image through CE marking, especially for small manufacturers with less known brands.
- Reproduction ETA is an economic alternative for SMEs

A word of encouragement for new applicants

- The ETA procedure is simpler than it looks on paper
- Competent Technical Assessment Bodies (TAB) all across Europe guide you through the procedure
- TAB staff has both technical and legal expertise and can advise you on ETA related questions
- Find a competent partner TAB here: https://www.eota.eu/en-GB/content/how-to-find-a-tab/55/
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**EOTA’s priorities with regard to EAD development**

- Ensure swift publication of EADs in the Official Journal of the European Union
- through closer cooperation with the European Commission and agreement on standard procedures
- Develop EADs in new product areas
- Develop EADs as supplementary documents to incomplete harmonized standards
- Develop modular EADs, if required by manufacturers (EADs as supplementary documents to one basic EAD)
EOTA’s priorities with regard to ETAs

- Promote the use of ETAs as a voluntary, independent and harmonised product assessment among manufacturers
- Further improve the ETA procedure (processing times have already been cut considerably!)
- Promote the use of ETA assessed construction products by providing additional technical specifications related to fitness for use

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EOTA's objectives for planned revision of the CPR

- Improve ETA procedure on the basis of lessons learned from the past four years, especially with regard to
  - acceleration of citation of references to EADs in the Official Journal of the European Union
  - clearer division of competence between the European Commission (legal compliance) and EOTA
  - revision (simplification) of Annex II of the CPR
  - need for provisions for the validity of ETAs after changes in the relevant EAD
  - implementation of coexistence period for EADs when adopting amendments or conversions from ETAGs
- Simplify procedures for small and medium enterprises to make the ETA route more attractive to them

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EOTA's objectives for planned revision of the CPR

- Make safety of construction products in actual use situations a priority again, alongside free trade!
- Find a way to better align product requirements and national provisions for design and execution
- Develop more efficient ways of dealing with incomplete harmonised standards, e.g.
  - by developing a ‘fast track’ for supplementary EADs that only cover those essential characteristics that are not addressed by incomplete harmonised standards.
### EOTA’s objectives for planned revision of the CPR

#### Situation under the former Construction Products Directive (until June 2013)

- **Provisions related to the assessment of product performance**
- **Provisions on design, execution, installation etc. (fitness for use)**
- **European Technical Assessment Guideline or Common Understanding of Assessment Procedure**
- **European technical approval (ETA)**
- **Covering information on product performance as well as design, execution, installation etc. (fitness for use)**

#### Situation under the Construction Products Regulation (since July 2013)

- **Provisions related to the assessment of product performance**
- **Provisions on design, execution, installation etc. (fitness for use)**
- **No longer covered, but urgently needed by construction professionals**
- **European Assessment Document (EAD)**
- **European Technical Assessment (ETA)**
- **Covering information on product performance only**
EOTA's position on the current discussion about a potential revision of the CPR

- A repeal of the CPR is a step back from harmonisation and towards barriers to trade and thus no option for the construction industry.
- Changing the system completely only four years after its full implementation might lead to insecurity and a loss of trust in the system. Our opinion: Keep the system, but eliminate its flaws.
- The large number of EADs cited or adopted and under development emphasises the strong interest of manufacturers in the ETA route as an alternative to the CEN process.
- The outcome of the study concerning the evaluation of EOTA underlines the benefits of the EOTA route.

Thank you very much for your attention!

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