

ACTIS launches first multifoil to be certified by TRADA

The first thin multi foil insulation in Europe to be certified by a UKAS accredited in-situ certification scheme hits the market this spring.

TRISO SUPER 10+, launched by Europe's leading thin multi foil insulation company, ACTIS, has been certified by BM TRADA Certification, whose product certification scheme has been accredited by UKAS, the government recognised body to assess organisations providing certification or testing.

The latest product to be developed by the French insulation company is an evolution of its popular TRISO SUPER 10 – a 19 layer product designed to insulate using a fraction of the thickness of traditional, bulk insulation materials.

TRISO-SUPER 10+ was thoroughly tested in-situ at both TRADA Technology and ACTIS' 'real life' test sites in High Wycombe and France to earn its certification. The accreditation of BM TRADA Certification's Building Insulation Product Scheme by UKAS means the product's certification should easily satisfy specifiers of its performance.

ACTIS UK and Ireland director Matthew King explained: "The fact that we've received certification from a body whose product certification scheme has now been accredited by UKAS confirms that we were justified in battling to show that testing the insulation in real life situations is a viable and realistic way to determine how it performs in a 'normal' building.

"We have believed for many years that this way of testing provides a more genuine and real life way of assessing the efficacy of our products in day to day life. This methodology takes into account factors not assessed in lab tests such as fluctuating temperatures, wind and rain."

In July 2011, BM TRADA became the first European organisation of its type to win the United

Kingdom Accreditation Service accreditation for an insulation product certification scheme with an option to base assessment on in-situ testing.

"The accreditation, after a five year development process by BM TRADA and review by independent experts in consultation with UKAS, is confirmation of the competence, impartiality and independence of this certification scheme," explained Matthew.

"This is a major breakthrough and is very exciting for us – and we hope for the building industry as a whole. It also confirms to those who have already been using our products that they have made the right decision – and will help reassure householders renovating their homes and small scale builders that they were right to believe in us.

"With house building now starting to pick up again, albeit slowly, since the rapid slowdown after the credit crunch first hit, this is good news for ACTIS. It means house builders resuming their programmes will be able to incorporate our products into their specification with confidence."

As well as the beneficial thermal and vapour control qualities which TS10+ offers, because it is so much thinner than other forms of insulation, developers can get more usable living space from each hectare they develop.

Achieving the code for sustainable homes using traditional insulation would necessitate thick layers of bulk insulation. Multifoil insulation provides an equivalent thermal performance with a much lower thickness – only 38mm in the case of TS10+ – but may still need to be used in conjunction with other materials to meet current Building Regulations.



Actis UK technical manager David Curtis and UK and Ireland director Matthew King with the new TRISO SUPER 10+.

"With timber frame construction methods being more popular during times of economic growth where the need for speedy construction is greater, multifoil insulation is perfectly poised to benefit from the resurgence in large scale house building which will come about once the economy has stabilised and once new government incentives to get buyers on the housing ladder have bedded in," explained Matthew.

Section leader at TRADA Technology, Dr Vic Kearley, added: "As the thermal performance requirements of buildings is raised, simply increasing the thickness of conventional bulk insulation materials becomes less and less attractive. Doubling the thickness does not double the performance of the structure. We therefore need to consider other solutions, such as multifoil insulation, to achieve the target performance levels. It is clear that many new and refurbished buildings are not achieving their intended thermal performance levels, for a variety of reasons. The in-situ type test we have developed gives a more realistic measure of the real performance of an insulated structure and how this varies with weather conditions. We are working within CEN to standardise in-situ tests for elements and structures, which offer a powerful tool for the improvement of building performance."

Matthew added: "In the same way that professional mountaineers use ultra thin but incredibly thermally efficient sleeping bags in sub zero temperatures while their amateur counterparts shiver in thick equivalents, our TS10+ may not look like it means business – but it does!"

"In the UK there are currently millions of period houses with loft spaces which are difficult to upgrade to habitable space by conventional means. Multifoil insulation can provide a solution for these homes and we hope to extend their use to other applications, as we have done in France."

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