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## TECHNICAL ADVICE NOTE

### ADHESIVES FOR TILES PUBLICATION OF BS EN 12004 DEFINITIONS AND SPECIFICATION

We shall, at long last, soon be seeing the publication of BS EN 12004, the standard which sets out the minimum performance requirements for ceramic tile adhesives in Europe. The document sets out the designation and classification system for the different types of adhesives e.g. cementitious, dispersion, reaction resin, based on performance in the various test.

For any manufacturer to claim conformance to the Standard, the product must possess the fundamental characteristics (mandatory) outlined for each type of adhesive. Where a manufacturer classifies his product to a category within the Standard, e.g. CIT, this automatically confirms conformance.

However, where a product is CE marked, this does not necessarily mean that its performance complies to all of the mandatory requirements in BS EN 12004. Instead, it implies that the adhesive satisfies the mandated part of the Standard.

In practical terms this means that a cementitious adhesive failing to meet the performance requirements in the heat ageing and freeze/thaw tests (which are fundamental characteristics) can still be allowed to carry the CE mark because neither of these two conditioning requirements form part of the Construction Products Directive Mandate (Annex ZA to BS EN 12004) for Durability.

Before purchasing a product, therefore, a user must check the label on the container. This applies particularly to cementitious adhesives. The label may make reference to BS EN 12004 and may carry a CE Mark but it is important to examine the rest of the text. If the adhesive fails to meet the requirements for heat ageing and freeze/thaw the label should say either NPD (no performance determined) or should state a value in  $N/mm^2$ , which will inevitably be less than  $0.5N/mm^2$ .

In conclusion, good quality products will carry a classification rating (e.g. C1TE), a CE Mark and a reference to BS EN 12004, with substantiated data on the label. Low performance adhesives will have omissions to this data, especially for classification rating.