



August 1, 2008

TO: PARTIES INTERESTED IN EVALUATION REPORTS ON STAY-IN-PLACE, CEMENT-BASED, FOAM-PLASTIC INSULATING CONCRETE FORMS (ICFs) FOR CONSTRUCTING POST-AND-BEAM STRUCTURAL CONCRETE WALLS (a.k.a., STRUCTURAL-GRID CONCRETE WALLS)

SUBJECT: Status Report on:

- **Proposed Acceptance Criteria for Stay-in-place, Cement-based, Foam-plastic Insulating Concrete Forms (ICFs) for Constructing Post-and-beam Structural Concrete Walls, Subject AC361-1007-R1 (PB/ME)**
- **Proposed Acceptance Criteria for Stay-in-place Insulating Concrete Form (ICF) Systems for Structural-grid Concrete Walls, Subject AC401-0508-R1 (PB/KS)**
- **Affected legacy evaluation reports.**

Dear Madam or Sir:

This is in response to inquiries from representatives of the ICF industry requesting clarification of the status of two recently proposed acceptance criteria: AC361 and AC401, which were discussed at the October 2007 and May 2008 evaluation committee meetings, respectively. Committee action on the proposed acceptance criteria was to hold each for further study.

AC361-1007-R1 is being developed by ICC-ES staff for current legacy report holders requesting recognition with the 2006 *International Building Code*® (IBC) and the 2006 *International Residential Code*® (IRC). The draft document addresses all relevant code issues, including weather protection, fire resistance, and structural performance. Whereas, AC401-0508-R1 was proposed by a current evaluation report applicant, without input from staff, to address only the structural aspects of structural grid concrete walls.

The status for these two criteria are as follows:

- **AC361** (http://www.icc-es.org/Criteria_Development/0710-pre/ac361.pdf): ICC-ES staff feels the proposed criteria can be approved as presented. However, if industry does not agree, staff recommends that industry take the initiative and provide a revised draft acceptance criteria that can be considered for approval by the evaluation committee. The contents of AC361 should remain comprehensive, that is, it should specify all requirements (non-structural and structural) that are

necessary to establish code compliance. However, the structural provisions of AC361 should only address the performance of structural grid concrete walls and elements within the elastic range of the material and should include test protocols and data analysis procedures for deriving an “equivalent thickness” for post-and-beam walls. The acceptance criteria will limit the use of the products for resisting wind loads and seismic loads for buildings located in seismic design categories A and B.

Industry should submit input on AC361 to Peter Bahlo no later than September 1, 2008, so that it can be ready for the Alternative Criteria Process agenda in October 2008. If the criteria can be ready for posting on the October 2008 Alternative Criteria Process agenda, then there will be a 30 day comment period after which time ICC-ES staff will decide whether to revise the criteria and repost on a future agenda for additional comment or to place the item on the agenda for the February 2009 Evaluation Committee meeting.

- **AC401** (http://www.icc-es.org/Criteria_Development/0805-pre/AC401.pdf): The subject of this acceptance criteria will be revised by staff to limit it to recognition of post-and-beam structural concrete walls (a.k.a., structural-grid concrete walls) for use as seismic-force resisting systems for buildings located in Seismic Design Categories C, D, E, and F. Further work in this area by ICC-ES staff and industry is necessary to develop an acceptable approach that can be incorporated into AC401.

ICC-ES acknowledges that the postponement of evaluation committee approval of AC361 and AC401 is difficult for affected evaluation report holders who urgently need evaluation reports issued to the 2006 I-codes. It has been our policy to insist on an approved acceptance criteria before issuing evaluation reports to the current building code. In the interim, however, ICC-ES is considering allowing the current evaluation report holders to submit an application for conversion or update of their evaluation report to the 2006 I-codes before AC361 and AC401 are finalized by the evaluation committee, provided the new evaluation reports require a weather-resistant exterior wall envelope compliant with Section 1403 of the 2006 IBC (without reference to the exceptions provided in this code section) and limit the use of the wall system to resisting wind loads and seismic loads for buildings located in Seismic Design Categories A and B. The converted or updated reports would be based on data submitted in the current files.

You are cordially invited to submit written comments, within 30 days of the date of this letter. Please use the comment form on the web site attaching any letters to the form. An explanation of the alternate criteria process can be found on our web site at http://www.icc-es.org/Criteria_Development/alternative_criteria_process.shtml.

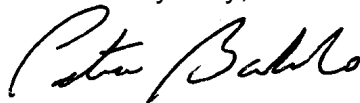
All comments received in the 30-day comment period will be considered in preparing a proposed criteria that may be considered at a future Evaluation Committee meeting. Comments received will be posted on the web site shortly after the close of the comment period.

Your cooperation is requested in forwarding to the Los Angeles business/regional office all material directed to the Evaluation Committee. Parties interested in the deliberations of the committee should refrain from communicating, whether in writing or verbally, with committee members. The committee reserves the right to refuse communications that do not comply with this request.

Newly approved acceptance criteria may involve test methods or test protocols that are not currently included in the scope of testing services offered by accredited testing laboratories. As noted in the ICC-ES Rules of Procedure for Evaluation Reports, the scope of the laboratory's accreditation must include the type of testing that is to be reported to ICC-ES. We encourage accredited laboratories to expand their scopes of accreditation to include testing under newly approved acceptance criteria. Please note that testing laboratories must be accredited by the International Accreditation Service (IAS) or by another accreditation body that is a signatory to the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation Mutual Recognition Arrangement. For further information, please contact IAS at (562) 699-0541, extension 3309, or send an e-mail to pmccullen@iasonline.org.

Please submit all comments using the form on the web site. Attach any letters to the comment form. If you have any questions (not comments), please contact the undersigned at (800) 423-6587, extension 3306. You may also reach us by e-mail at es@icc-es.org.

Yours very truly,



Peter Bahlo, P.E.
Senior Staff Engineer

PB/raf

Enclosure

cc: Evaluation Committee