Wood Truss Council of America

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November 19, 2005

Mr. Mo Madani
Building Codes and Standards Office
Florida Department of Community Affairs
2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2100

Re: Discussion for the December Building Commission Meeting on a FBC 2004 transition period for truss design drawing conversion on model/tract truss designs.

Dear Mo;

The 2004 Florida Building Code and its adoption schedule has been a dynamic process the latest of which is the implementation of ASCE 7-02 which looks like it will go into formal effect sometime in December. Everyone in the truss industry realizes that truss design drawing changes need to be made, yet would prefer to make them only once in order to minimize the transition time and cost. Planning has been difficult due to the uncertainty of which version of ASCE 7 would ultimately be used and when there would be specific authorized use. This has a particular impact on the inventory of truss designs that are repeated over the years, e.g. model/tract house truss designs.

To give an example of the impact of this issue, a single component manufacturer that does tract work needs to convert 880,000 model house truss design drawings, essentially over night. This has resulted in an engineering demand to produce 7,500 new truss design drawing conversions per day over and above the processing of 10,000 to 12,000 daily truss design drawings by the engineering group this component manufacturer works with. The magnitude of the issue increases when other component manufacturer customers of the engineering group are making similar “need to convert these truss design drawings tomorrow or the project will be stopped” demands.

The considerations for everyone involved in this process include:

1. A date of implementation has finally been picked for ASCE 7-02 — December 16. (December 16th was selected for this example as the exact date has yet to be formally determined as far as we know.)
2. The following day all the designs that were structurally fine on December 15 have to be re-designed because of the ASCE 7 version change on December 16.
3. Obviously this is impossible to do and there needs to be a rational transition process because rushing through a re-design process has the significant potential to interject errors in the conversion designs being produced and also with any new designs being requested — haste is never good in engineering design of trusses.

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4. It is also obvious that the truss design undertaken on December 15th provided trusses that carry all of the expected loads applied to them very safety, and all the structures built using a December 15th truss design will transfer all the applied loads as safely as a structure using trusses designed to ASCE 7-02 on December 16th. We will supply affirmation of this assertion by the engineering companies that are undertaking truss design engineering on a daily basis prior to discussion of this concept by the State of Florida Building Commission.

At the November 19, 2005 Building Officials Association of Florida meeting the BOAF Board of Directors agreed with the concept of bringing this issue to the State of Florida Building Commission for their counsel on the appropriate transition process. The BOAF Board of Directors stated, by unanimous motion, that they would support a transition process acceptable to the Florida Building Commission so that engineering can be processed in a reasonable manner that maintains good engineering quality through this truss re-design process.

Should there be any questions regarding this issue, please call Ryan Dexter (608 310-6744), Richard Zimmermann (608-310-6743), Will Warlick (608-310-6708) or Kirk Grundahl (608-274-2345).

Thank you very much in advance for your consideration.

Respectfully Yours,

Kirk Grundahl, P.E.
Executive Director