

Almost But Not Quite

RICOWI Decides Not to Mobilize on Fran

By Phil Dregger, PE, RRC

The Mobilization Committee for RICOWI's Wind Investigation Program held teleconference meetings September 6 and 9 to review wind speed data and damage reports from Hurricane Fran for the purpose of deciding if criteria were met for mobilization.

At 1 p.m. September 9, the storm was declared a "non-event" in terms of mobilizing the eight four-person teams. Early estimates of maximum sustained winds when Fran made landfall were less than 95 mph and early reports of damage described extensive storm "surge" damage to beachfront properties, but fairly limited wind damage to roofs of inland properties.

Ways to streamline and improve the mobilization process were discussed and agreed on at the October 11-12 RICOWI meeting in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Patty Wood-Shields, RICOWI secretary, reported that FEMA (the Federal Emergency Management Agency) granted a space to RICOWI representative Marty Obando during their preliminary helicopter "fly over" damage assessment. An understanding has been reached with FEMA representatives to grant space to RICOWI for future hurricane fly over damage assessments. This will greatly aid in identifying key areas for roof damage investigations.

Highlights from Executive Committee Reports at the Oak Ridge meeting follow.

Asphalt Roofing Manufacturers Association, Joe Jones: A brief summary report entitled "ARMA Wind Research Program Report," regarding ARMA's wind tunnel and full-scale shingle uplift research at Colorado State University, is now available. The research focused on determining appropriate pressure coefficients for use in calculating uplift pressures on "air-permeable" asphalt shingles. The full technical report is expected to be available early this year. For more information, call ARMA, 301/231-9050.

Metal Building Manufacturers Association, Lee Shoemaker: A pilot study in dynamic uplift testing of metal roof panels using electromagnets was recently completed under MBMA and AISI (American Iron and Steel Institute) auspices at Mississippi State University. The pilot study used five magnets to apply loads to a 2'x2' metal roof specimen. Future plans include expansion of the test to a 12'x24' specimen. Correlation between the dynamic test and existing static tests will also be attempted.

Dr. Shoemaker also reported that, based on Dade County, Florida's missile impact requirements, MBMA is sponsoring research at Texas Tech University into the effects of small openings in roof and wall systems on internal building pressurization.

RCI, Phil Dregger: As part of the pre-mobilization activities for Hurricane Fran, RCI was asked to designate a total of five consultants to serve on various investigation teams. Since RCI's original commitment was to mobilize three consultants, its Executive Committee has reviewed and approved this higher level of participation for future hurricane events. RCI consultants have also been asked to serve in the role of "report writers."

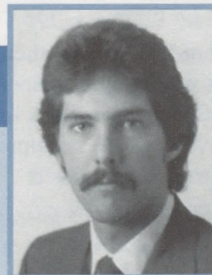
SPRI, John Hickman: The proposed American National Standard BSR/SPRI/RP-4-96 "Wind Design for Ballasted Roofing Systems" has been revised to reflect ASCE 7-95 maximum 3-second gust wind speeds and has been rebalotted to the canvassing committee. All but two objections, including one by RCI RICOWI Representative Phil Dregger pertaining to the need to avoid opportunities for excess air infiltration below roof membranes, were resolved by editorial changes and additions to the Commentary Section. Final presentation to ANSI for adoption consideration was anticipated by the end of 1996.

The SPRI Fastener Pull-Out Procedure has been approved as ANSI Standard FX-1-1996. Copies of the new standard are available from SPRI headquarters.

The proposed Roof Edge Standard for Low-slope Roofing is ready for ANSI canvassing. Anyone wishing to be on the canvas list may contact Linda King at SPRI, 617-237-7879.

SRMA, John Miller: A moratorium on code changes took effect January 1, 1997. A draft version of the new unified national code, the International Building Code, is due out by April 1997. Final approval of the IBC is slated for the fall of 1999, with adoption scheduled for January 2000.

The next RICOWI meeting is scheduled for March 27 in conjunction with the RCI National Convention in Anaheim, CA.



About The Author

Phil Dregger is president and senior consultant of Technical Roof Services, Inc., Pleasant

Hill, CA. He is an active member of the American Society of Testing and RCI's representative to the Roofing Industry Committee on Wind Issues (RICOWI).