

MBMA and MRSA Merge to Benefit Metal Building and Roofing Systems

BY J. TERRELL LANDRUM

The Metal Roofing Systems Association (MRSA) was founded in 1994 as a result of a strategic planning session held by members of the Metal Building Manufacturers Association (MBMA) in 1993. The consensus arrived at was that a viable presence was required within the metal roofing industry that extended beyond a simple marketing effort. The territory covered by MRSA stretched beyond metal building systems. MRSA-member companies were involved in manufacturing metal roofing for conventional buildings and retrofit application of metal roof systems over failed conventional roofing.

MRSA set out to impact and change the roofing industry through a series of programs that tackled design, aesthetic, safety, and quality issues. It created a roofing design manual and video that focused on the various applications of metal roofing systems for engineers and architects. The most significant of these programs was the creation of the MRSA Technical Committee.

This committee, through the assistance of Farabaugh Engineering & Testing, Inc., conducted a series of wind uplift tests in accordance with the ASTM E-1592 test standard. The results of these tests led to a series of recommendations on this standard that were presented to MBMA and other industry groups. Those recommendations are now being balloted within the standards industry.

The MBMA has been serving the building industry since 1956. Metal building systems represent 69% of the single story non-residential market under 150,000 sq. ft. All of those buildings feature metal roofing systems. This total represents the majority of non-residential roofing going on in the U.S.

A Metal Roofing Systems Advisory Council made up of

MBMA and MRSA members was put in place, and in the spring of 1998, met to construct a uniform certification program. Terry Wolfe was nominated to chair the Technical Subcommittee on Roofing and to work with MBMA's full time Director of Research & Engineering, Dr. W. Lee Shoemaker, who has created several certification/testing programs.

An example of the MBMA's rigorous standards is the AISC category MB quality certification program. Through this program, safe design and manufacture of metal building systems by MBMA members is encouraged. Overseen by AISC, this extensive program provides a uniform, nationally-recognized certification process for metal building systems manufacturers. It includes a rigorous examination of each participant's engineering and manufacturing policies and procedures, as well as its quality assurance and control standards.

MBMA requires that all member companies, including MRSA counterparts, earn certification as a condition of membership. New members wishing to join must have been certified one year after the certification program is in place. The roofing certification program is currently under development.

In 1997, MBMA member companies shipped nearly \$2.5 billion in metal building systems to contractors, an increase from \$2.2 billion in 1996. That translates to 1.88 million tons, up from 1.69 million tons the previous year.

The organization's efforts in raising the bar in the field, notably in research and development, applications engineering, education, marketing, and safety bodes well for all companies with membership in the "redefined" association.

(Editor's Note: The above was extracted from "One Voice," by J. Terrell Landrum, Chairman of the MBMA. For more information on the MBMA, phone 216-244-7333.)

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