The European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) has appointed a working group (WG 13) to develop a new standard based on ‘in-situ’ tests to measure the thermal performance of all insulation products under real life conditions.

This standard will aim to assess more accurately the impact of insulation materials on the energy performance in buildings. This is particularly relevant for renovated buildings which represent a major challenge in the UK because of the Government’s drive to reduce CO2 emissions.

The new standard would enable climatic conditions to be taken into account, as well as the insulation’s resistance to air infiltration - a major impact on the insulation’s thermal performance

and ultimately on the building’s energy consumption.

The move is supported by the European Association of Multifoil Manufacturers (EMM) and its Chairman Laurent Thierry :

"The UK Government has a long term commitment to reducing household energy consumption by 35% by 2020 based on 2001-05 levels and properly insulated buildings will play a key part in meeting these targets. If we’re measuring ‘real-world’ buildings’ consumption, we should also be giving consumers ‘real-world’ measurements on the insulation’s thermal performance. Therefore, it is essential that we reconsider the standards used to assess the insulating materials ".

Laurent Thierry continues, “the ‘in-situ’ tests we have been demanding for several years will enable the real thermal performance of the insulation materials to be measured much more accurately since they take into account the air resistance of the materials, which is a decisive factor".

The Technical Office of the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) first gave Technical Committee n°89 (TC89), - which specialises in the thermal performance of buildings - responsibility for creating this new working group, last May. Its opening meeting was held on 29 January (2010) when the scope of the standard was precisely defined.