

**Experts workshop about
'Testing and standardisation issues
for Taps and Showers'**

**26 April 2018, Joint Research Centre, Seville
(Spain)**

Draft minutes

Contents

Agenda	3
Participants List.....	4
Minutes	5

Agenda

Schedule	Topic
09:00 – 09:15	Registration and welcome
09:15 – 09:30	Introduction of participants, context and background (EC)
09:30 – 10:30 (incl. 20 min for Q&A)	<p>Measuring the performance of TS in the EU:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Current practice– Future developments and limitations– Best of ALL initiative– Standardisation: process and timing <p>(Speakers: Yvonne Orgill, BMA/EBF; Christian Taylor-Hamlin, NEOPERL; Holger Fehrholz, SIMILOR/CEIR)</p>
10:30 – 11:00 (incl. 15 min for Q&A)	Testing of TS with the Swedish Standards approach (Speaker: Marco Van Brink, KIWA)
11:00 – 11:15	Coffee break
11:15 – 12:45	Technical discussion about testing methods for assessing the functionality of TS (moderated by EC)
12:45 – 13:00	Sum-up, follow-up and closure of the meeting (EC)
13:00 – 14:00	Informal lunch and networking

Participants List

First name	Last name	Organisation	Participation
Tarik	Bellahcene	NSF	Physical
Marie	Baton	CLASP	Web
Peter	Bennich	Swedish Energy Agency	Web
Mauro	Cordella	EC-JRC	Physical
Holger	Fehrholz	CEIR / Similor	Physical
Bruno	Furderer	Similor	Physical
Paula	Gomes	DGEG (PT Gov)	Web
Werner	Heinzelmann	Hansgrohe	Physical
Kjell Ake	Henriksson	JM / Swedish Labelling System	Physical
Pierre	Henry	EC-ENV	Physical
Thomas	Hinsch	DMWI (DE Gov)	Physical
Timo	Kopka	Franke	Physical
Andreas	Kurz	Hansgrohe	Physical
Silvia	Menezes	DECO (on behalf of BEUC)	Physical
Filipa	Newton	ADENE (PT Gov)	Physical
Yvonne	Orgill	BMA / Water Label	Physical
Javier	Sanfelix	EC-JRC	Physical
Paul	Taylor	NSF	Physical
Christian	Taylor Hamlin	Neoperl	Physical
Marco	Van Brink	Kiwa	Physical
Andre	Wachau	BAM (DE Gov)	Web
Asa	Wahlstrom	Chalmers University	Web
Oliver	Wolf	EC-JRC	Physical

Minutes

After welcoming all participants, the EC briefly presented the European context for Taps and Showers, and explained that the main goal of the meeting was to better understand the technical background related to the testing of the product group. This will feed the follow-up summary study that JRC is preparing for facilitating the discussion on policy options for this product group. The study should be ready in summer 2018. Planning of further consultations is still to be agreed.

Representatives from German and Swedish governments asked to clarify about the legal framework. A Voluntary Agreement is possible only under Ecodesign. Moreover, testing of functionality is necessary to ensure the credibility of the Energy Label system, and more in general of a label. Moreover, a paramount parameter for taking a Voluntary Agreement into account is that it covers at least 80% of the market.

The EC explained the legal framework and explained that policy options will be assessed in a second stage, based on the technical issues discussed in the meeting and along the consultation process. The Guidelines for Voluntary Agreements were communicated to the industry. At the moment all policy options are under consideration.

The European Bathroom Forum said that at the moment they are focusing on a water label that also includes energy aspects. They managed so far to cover 59% of the Taps and Showers market, including extra-EU manufacturers. They consider possible to achieve 80%, if and when the EC opts for Voluntary Agreement as the preferred option for taps and showers.

Representatives from industry presented briefly the European Bathroom Forum's Best of All initiative, aiming to harmonise labelling approaches in Europe, as well as current testing practices and future developments for Taps and Showers. On the other hand KIWA presented the experience of testing Taps and Showers with the Swedish Standards approach. A technical discussion followed until the lunch break and the conclusion of the meeting.

Industry members said that the Swedish Standards include subjective elements (e.g. activities tested, colour detection system, possibility to change outcomes of the assessment and ranking of products depending on testing conditions) and that they are costly, time-consuming, not applicable to all taps on the market and not repeatable. Kiwa replied that Round Robin Tests conducted in 4 labs support the repeatability of the testing methods, and admitted that the test method may have to be adapted for the types of taps not present on the Swedish market.

An industry member explained that the focus of testing should be on water flow rates, because the main function of Taps and Showers is to deliver water, which is then associated to the consumption of water, and not vice versa. Testing of water flow rates is easy. Another industry member said that Taps and Showers are part of a system and that water heating is the most important factor for the overall energy consumption. It was also pointed out that flow rates are a central parameter for national buildings regulations. Another participant indicated that total energy use is also regulated for buildings.

A representative of a consumer association said that flow rates are the parameter that would allow communicating more easily to consumers. However, some additional parameters should be also considered to ensure the functionality of products (e.g. spread of water as done in the EPA's WaterSense). Moreover, different positions of showers should be tested. Another participant said that both water and energy should be addressed.

The Swedish Standards consider different positions which are then mixed into an average value. The testing approach behind the current version of the Water Label is instead based on the maximum flow rate, which is the worst case in terms of water consumption.

It was in general agreed that spread of water and water drops are important parameters, and that their testing could be harmonised relatively easily. That would cover some functionality aspects, together with the other standards addressing water flow rates and pressure. Testing of rinsing efficiency and activities was instead considered to be more problematic and subjective since a change in the testing conditions could alter significantly the assessment and rating of a product. An industry member also suggested to be realistic and to consider that almost all schemes are focusing on water flow rates only. If water flows are too low, this would raise complaints by consumers. Kiwa explained that rinsing is a function of flow rate and time.

The EC asked how the rinsing performance is tested in the Swedish Standards, considering this to be one of the main differences with the Water Label.

Kiwa showed a video and explained that the test is performed placing a defined quantity of a specific paint on a cotton tissue. Water is passed through the cotton, and the outflow is visually evaluated to measure the moment in which it becomes transparent. This is repeated 10 times and deviations are found to be less than 10%. Rinsing efficiency tests are technologically neutral, at least for the Swedish market.

Participants also wondered how the costs of the Swedish Standard test could be reduced. Kiwa replied that they are considering to decrease the number of activities tested. Measurements should be feasible, affordable, and independent.

Although it is not perfect, according to Kiwa the Swedish Standard test is a feasible way to assess the functionality of Taps and Showers.

It was asked what is the market representativeness of the Swedish Energy Label, which seemed to be low (about 300 registrations, compared to the 3000 registration for the Swiss Energy Label). It was replied that this is mainly a B2B label used in new buildings.

Industry members said that it is difficult to assess which technology is better, and that standards should not restrict consumers' choice of products. For instance, basin taps seem to be still widely implemented in Ireland and the UK. Technological neutrality is a key issue.

A participant informed that ISO has started a standardisation initiative for the labelling of water efficient products based on the experience of WELS (AU/NZ). It was clarified that the first meeting will take place at the end of July 2018, and that this initiative concerns the voluntary classification of products.

A representative from the German government suggested to identify gaps on testing and to prepare an official mandate for CEN/CENELEC. The EC explained that a mandate can be considered independently from policy options. Time will be needed, at least 3-4 years including the adoption of a standardisation mandate. Update of existing standards is possible within TC 164, and the application of Swedish Standards out of Sweden is still to be tested.

A representative from the German government said that it could be possible to begin with an informal request for a standardisation, followed by a formal request when to label all products. Political sensitiveness for this product group was underlined.

A participant asked if the Water Label is evolving and including tests of other labels. The European Bathroom Forum explained that this is happening more effectively and at a faster pace than what would be achievable with a formal mandate. Modifications to the Water Label and its testing approach can be applied more easily to adapt to changes in market demands.

Moreover, the Water Label comes with a public database where information on products is registered.

It was in general agreed that it would be better if industry could work on standards without a mandate, and to further investigate the possibility to merge Water Label and Swedish Energy Label into 1 single concept that would allow harmonisation at European level. According to some participants, the EC should lead this process.

A participant also asked about the possibility to apply a more systemic approach. It was explained that different policy tools and legislations apply to different parts of the system. For instance, heating systems are object of specific regulations. However, discussion of system aspects for legislative purposes would be much more complicated.

Before concluding the meeting, the EC thanked all participants for their valuable contribution to the discussion, and informed them that minutes of the meeting will be circulated, as well as presentations. Further information about next steps will follow. In the meantime, any written comment is welcome if stakeholders would like to provide additional input on technical issues related to the testing of Taps and Showers.