

EURO CODES

What is the difference between a Euro Code and a British Standard? A technocrat will answer the question with a highly technical description of the differences between the two, but my question is aimed at commercial managers, decision makers and risk assessors. It is these people that should know what one of the principal differences is between Euro Codes and British Standards.

The answer is that most Euro Codes include a provision for fitness for purpose. Therefore, if you have decided to be in front of the market by stating that you will undertake your work in accordance with Euro Codes, then you are also stating that your designs and workmanship will be fit for the purpose desired by your customer.

What has become apparent is that when the British technocrats went to the various meetings that were held in Brussels or other European cities to discuss having a coordinated Euro Code, they either switched off or fell asleep when their European counterparts decided that it would be a good idea to make the relevant goods and workmanship fit for the purpose and duly signed up and agreed to it.

Therefore, if you are going to state that your work will be undertaken in accordance with a Euro Code, make sure that you exclude the fitness for purpose provision in the Euro Codes in your statements. Alternatively, whilst they may be somewhat dated now, just continue to state that you will undertake your work to the relevant British Standard.

This issue has arisen because a structural and civil engineering consultant engineer stated that his designs had been undertaken in accordance with the relevant structural engineering Euro Code and there is a problem with the design and his client is relying upon the fitness for purpose provision in the Euro Code, which the consultant engineer did not even realise was there.

Upon looking at other Euro Codes, it is noted that they also include similar fitness for purpose provisions.