

SAP Industry Forum: Terms of Reference

Purpose of the SAP Industry Forum Group

The purpose of the SAP Industry Forum Group (SAPIF) is to debate technical and policy issues as they relate to the National Calculation Method for energy rating of dwellings, comprising the Standard Assessment Procedure and Reduced Data Standard Assessment Procedure, collectively hereafter referred to as SAP. This will formalise an effective feedback loop for industry and other stakeholders, ensuring they have the opportunity to represent their views. This will facilitate the SAP Contract Contractors (BRE as Lots 1-3 and RDL as Lot 4) to gather industry views for communication to government and BRE. Additionally, SAPIF facilitates both government and BRE to put forward items for discussion and feedback.

This is different to the role of SPSIG (the SAP Scientific Integrity Group) whose role is to help maintain and improve the scientific integrity of the SAP 'model of reality'. SPSIG can be regarded as a (very) technical non-executive director helping the SAP contractor (BRE) develop new versions of SAP. It does not generally debate or consider policy questions.

Purpose of SAP

SAP is a calculation method to estimate the energy performance of UK dwellings. It is an asset-rating tool taking into account inter alia technical characteristics of the materials, products, and building services of the dwellings, some aspects of the external environment and applying a standardised user profile for heating and hot water use.

The Group should be mindful of the purpose of SAP, which is the assessment of the energy performance of dwellings in the UK, to help meet energy and environmental policy objectives and for regulation.

The accuracy of the SAP model should be no more than is sufficient for this purpose and over complication should be avoided.

The purpose of SAP is to provide an impartial assessment of the energy performance of a dwelling.

SAP should fairly reflect the evidence on performance of energy saving products. It is not the purpose of SAP to promote the sale of particular energy saving products, nor is it the intention to block or impede them.

The terms of reference for the SAP Industry Forum Group

Members of the Group are expected to possess a clear understanding of the role and scope of SAP, the Appendix Q process and the Product Characteristic Database (PCDB).

Terms of Reference of the SAP Industry Forum Group are:

- To consider, debate and contribute / participate in technical and policy issues related to SAP.
- To communicate industry views for onward communication to government and BRE and any other relevant organisation / body via the Secretariat.
- Where relevant, to proactively seek views from organisations they represent, to help ensure the success of this forum as the formal route for providing feedback and requests in relation to SAP.

The work of the SAP Industry Forum Group

The Group's work plan is not yet set, being an early piece of work for the Group. However, in addition to dealing with questions relating to SAP, it is expected that the Group might want to consider matters of principle (such as wider decarbonisation policies or on amendments that might be proposed in order to address possible changes to the requirements of SAP). In general, these will be issues where BRE or BEIS has identified a need for their consideration / consultation.

Conflicts of interest

Members must be technically competent in their chosen area of work and behave in a professional manner. Impartiality is not a prerequisite, but members should be mindful of the privilege, as members, and declare conflicts of interest.

Should a potential conflict of interest arise at any time, the member concerned must notify the Group chair, who in turn will notify all other members, and this will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The Group chair has the power to exclude any member from the meeting if the conflict of interest is sufficiently great in the Chair's opinion.

Operation of the SAP Industry Forum Group

UK Government representation within the group is from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), who are responsible for funding the development of SAP, and from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), who are responsible for Building Regulations.

UK devolved administrations will not sit within the SAPIF, but their views will be sought and represented by BEIS and MHCLG.

One of the purposes of SAP is as a compliance tool for the Building Regulations. BRE, as the contractor responsible for its development, will seek to bridge and highlight issues regarding the Building Regulations or available technical standards that prevent the requested recognition of products/technologies.

The Group will normally meet between two and four times a year, subject to the amount of business requiring their attention. BRE will host these meetings and RDL will act as the secretariat. The Group can set up sub-groups for specific tasks.

Any correspondence from outside that is directed to the Group should be addressed to the secretariat.

If members of SAPIF believe that the Secretariat is acting improperly, they can contact Barbara Garnier (email Barbara.Garnier@beis.gov.uk) at BEIS in confidence to discuss their concerns.

In general, at the meetings BRE, RDL, government or industry members will be presenting topics / issues for debate and consultation by the Group.

The names (but not email addresses) of the Group members will be made public. Documents recording minutes / actions / decisions of the meetings of the Group will also be made publicly available. However, documents intended for public view will be edited to preserve confidentiality where necessary. Meetings may involve discussions of confidential material, and that material and any associated notes from the discussions must remain confidential.

The Group may also conduct elements of its work outside formal meetings (e.g. by exchange of e-mail) wherever this would be an appropriate and efficient option.

There is no funding for undertaking any trade / product / service consultancy or new research work that the Group may identify and recommend. Travel expenses are not available for members of the Group.

Confidentiality

Members shall comply with RDL's SAP Contract Confidentiality Policy (SAPQA003) and Control of data records & software (SAPQA004); and will be required to complete RDL's SAP Contract SAPIF member Acceptance Form (SAPQA013).

Visiting experts / specialists or guests, will similarly comply with RDL's SAP Contract Confidentiality Policy (SAPQA003) and Control of data records & software (SAPQA004); and will be required to complete RDL's SAP Contract Specialist-Expert Acceptance Form (SAPQA014).

- End -

Appendix

Whilst not part of the Terms of Reference, the following items are included to inform the Group.

Mission Statement for the development of SAP / RdSAP

'The National Calculation Methodology for energy rating of dwellings (SAP / RdSAP) will be maintained and developed in support of Building Regulations and other Government policies, such as those that facilitate energy efficiency improvements.

SAP and the provision of SAP assessments must be sufficiently robust, providing consumer protection and minimising the risk that anticipated fuel bill savings are not achieved.

To achieve this, SAP must be reactive to a changing evidence-base and continuously seek to enhance accuracy. SAP must also support the recognition of innovative energy saving technologies, where relevant, whilst maintaining a robust and impartial assessment that preserves simplicity to minimise assessment cost.'

Energy Efficiency vs Energy Reduction Measures

Energy Efficiency Measures are defined as those that provide the same level of building service whilst reducing dwelling energy use. For example, a condensing boiler enables the same level of heating service to be provided with less energy than a non-condensing boiler.

Energy Saving Measures are defined as those that help occupants use less energy when they are willing to tolerate a lower level of building service. For example, a temperature controller may allow a heating system to adjust internal temperatures below standard SAP assumptions. These measures are not recognised by SAP, and depend on the extent to which occupants are willing to use them.

- End -

Change history:

Rev 2.0 Sarah Montgomery changed to Barbara Garnier