



ACI/227/15

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## **ACI questions spread of non-conforming products in UK**

The Approved Cables Initiative (ACI) is questioning the prevalence of faulty products in the UK construction sector following news from Australia that Non-Conforming Products (NCP) are a significant problem in the country's building and construction sector.

Last year, as already reported by the ACI, a national cable recall left some Australian cable importers experiencing financial difficulties, having failed to choose products from reputable manufacturers and suppliers. Around 40,000 homes and businesses still have potentially dangerous cable installed six months on from the recall.

The Australian construction sector reports a number of factors that are leading to a growth in faulty products including:

- a rise in online purchases
- gaps in the regulatory environment
- pressure to cut costs (competing on price for labour)
- a global market - where smaller, lightweight building products can be easily transported.

Examples of non-conforming goods found in Australia include steel, electrical products, glass, aluminium products and structural plywood. Reports have also highlighted asbestos found in cheap plasterboard products from China as well as gaskets, trains, mining equipment and other vehicles. Australia's Housing Industry Association is concerned that the builder is often the only person with any responsibility to make sure products are fit for purpose.

Kristin Brookfield, senior executive director of Australia's Housing Industry Association said: "Australia's framework for managing building materials is limited. Whilst we have a national building code and many of the necessary technical standards, oversight and checking is left to the last people in the supply chain – the builder and the building inspector. By leaving the regulation to the last possible moment, manufacturers and suppliers can still retail building products that may not be fit for purpose."

Commenting on the story, the ACI said: “We are keen to understand whether the problems experienced in Australia of non-conforming products are also being played out in the UK construction sector. Many of the reasons cited for the rise in NCPs have relevance for the UK too and we would ask all interested parties to let us know of any similar experiences they may have had.”

The ACI can be contacted at [info@aci.org.uk](mailto:info@aci.org.uk) or call 0208 946 6978/07973 636688. For further information about the ACI campaign visit [www.aci.org.uk](http://www.aci.org.uk)

## **Approved Cables Initiative**

*Approved Cables Initiative (ACI), an industry-wide working group, is highlighting the dangers of unsafe, substandard, non-approved and counterfeit cable to the cable supply industry (electric and data) and the general public.*

*Its work focuses upon communicating that such cable is dangerous and that there is a gap in current legislation and enforcement. It is currently pushing for changes to UK legislation to stop dangerous cable being imported and to increase the penalties for infringements.*

*Anyone with information or concerns about a suspected faulty or counterfeit cable should contact the ACI who will test samples and if found to be unsafe supply details to relevant industry regulators and legislators. ACI can also provide guidance where appropriate to installers.*

*The ACI works with supply chain representative bodies including Electric Distributors Association (EDA); Electric Contractors Association (ECA); Electric Safety First; British Approvals Service for Cables (BASEC); British Cables Association (BCA); Energy Networks Association (ENA); Ascertiva (previously the NICEIC Group Limited), SELECT and the Joint Industry Board (JIB).*

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