

## TFEC Bulletins -- Policy and Procedures

The timber-frame engineering community is in need of a concise, authoritative set of analysis and design guidelines, or bulletins. Technical and practice bulletins will be helpful to engineers new to the timber-frame industry as well as more experienced engineers as they attempt to educate clients, contractors, and code officials. The bulletins will carry the banner of the Timber Frame Engineering Council (TFEC), thus it is imperative that they be well written, accurate, and complete. This policy and procedures document is intended to establish the basis for development of TFEC Bulletins that achieve these objectives.

### Policy

The TFEC shall foster development of bulletins on topics of interest to engineers who analyze and design timber-frame structures. The bulletins shall represent the state of engineering practice for timber-frame structures and shall be prepared with due regard for the NSPE<sup>1</sup> Code of Ethics for Engineers. Bulletins shall be regarded as supplemental to and interpretative of building codes and ANSI-approved standards. Design methods not addressed in a TFEC Bulletin, however, shall not be prohibited based on the silence of a bulletin.

### Submission guidelines for authors

Bulletins must offer original reviews of past practice, present information of current interest or probe new fields of activity. Bulletins must be related to analysis and design of timber-frame structures, their components or subsystems, or companion systems (such as foundations and lateral load systems). Both theoretical and practical submissions are desired. Bulletins should not exceed 10 pages (12 pt Times New Roman font, 1.25 line spacing, 1-inch margins) including illustrations. Content and format of manuscripts must follow the guidelines contained in the accompanying manuscript template.

Manuscripts must be submitted to the TFEC Bulletins Editor in electronic (MS Word document or Adobe Postscript) form.

### Manuscript review process

Prior to submission, prospective authors should contact the Bulletins Editor to determine if the proposed document has potential as a TFEC Bulletin. The Editor may discuss the appropriateness of the subject of proposed document with the Technical Activities Committee (TAC). The Editor will advise the prospective author whether to proceed with manuscript preparation or will propose modifications to the subject material or approach that would make the document suitable as a bulletin. Within four weeks of submission, the Editor will determine

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<sup>1</sup> National Society of Professional Engineers

if the manuscript has potential as a TFEC Bulletin. A manuscript deemed not suitable (due to topic, presentation or quality of writing) will be returned to the author(s) for revisions without review. For a manuscript that meets the basic requirements for a bulletin, the Editor will select two or more reviewers. At least one of the reviewers must be a member of the TFEC TAC. To be accepted or rejected for publication, a manuscript must receive two positive or two negative reviews, respectively. If the Editor receives one positive and one negative review, a third, tie-breaking review, must be obtained. The Editor may serve as reviewer.

The Editor will send each reviewer a copy of the manuscript and a Manuscript Review form. Reviewers will have four weeks to complete their reviews. The reviewers will read the manuscript and complete the review forms, selecting one of the recommendation options and critiquing the work. The reviewers will send their review forms to the Editor, who will examine the review(s) and complete an Editor Summary Review form if appropriate. The Editor will then communicate the results of the reviews and the publication decision to the author(s).

The review decision will be one of the following:

- Accept in present form: The manuscript is suitable for publication as a TFEC Technical Bulletin in the present form with the possible exception of minor editorial changes. Re-review after final editing is not required.
- Tentatively accept, re-review required: The manuscript is not ready for publication in the present form. The Editor sends the reviews to the authors, and the authors are given the opportunity to revise and resubmit the manuscript. Authors may contact the Editor to discuss comments and concerns of the review and to determine modifications that would resolve the concerns. Authors may also contact the reviewers if the Editor first obtains permission from the reviewers for such direct contact; otherwise the reviewers shall remain anonymous. If the authors resubmit the manuscript, the Editor may perform the re-review or may return the manuscript to one or more of the original reviewers. Re-review does not guarantee acceptance for publication.
- Decline, no resubmission: The manuscript is not suitable for publication as a TFEC Bulletin. The Editor sends the reviews to the authors, indicating that the manuscript has been declined.

Authors who disagree with a review decision may appeal it, stating in writing the wish to do so. The Editor will forward the manuscript and all reviews to the TFEC Technical Activities Committee for final review. If the manuscript is accepted, the Editor will work with the authors to prepare the manuscript for publication. If it is again declined, no further appeal will be considered.

### **Publication of TFEC Technical and Practice Bulletins**

Manuscripts accepted for publication will be published under the banner of the TFEC. Authors must share the copyright for their work with the TFEC through the Timber Framers Guild and must supply the Guild's publications manager with a final draft of the manuscript in the required electronic format. The Guild's publications manager may require modifications to the manuscript to prepare it for printing in one of the Guild's publications. The Guild will agree to publish the Bulletin within six months of final submission. Publication media may be hardcopy print, electronic, or both. Authors must agree to forego payments normally made for submissions to Guild publications. Instead, payments will be made to the TFEC account held within the Guild to support the activities of the TFEC. Expenditure authority for these funds will reside entirely with the TFEC TAC, with oversight by the Guild's executive director.