



**Minutes of the QUALANOD Technical Committee meeting
held on 17 June 2004 (8h30 – 12h00)
in Zurich (Hotel Sofitel)**

TC members :

ESTAL

EAA

J. Bettencourt (Chairman)
R. Boi
W. Buchholz
P. Lloret
S. Meirsschaut
J. van den Heuvel
R. Wunderlin

Å. Andersson
E. Arnoux
R. Furneaux
W. Mader

Secretariat:

J. Schoppig
P. Bellot (Minutes)

Guests:

D. Brodalla
H. Sips (for part of the meeting)

Apologies:

T. Ulucak

A G E N D A

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2003
2. Statistical report (weight loss test)
3. 2nd draft of the new Specifications
 - 3.1. Discussion of some new proposals
 - 3.2. Final approval and date of implementation
4. Assessment of a new alternative system for sealing anodized aluminium
5. Inspection report - ADAL's remarks and request
6. Modification of anodizing parameters: current density and temperature
7. Preliminary meeting and visit to Coil by a QUALANOD delegation
8. Report on CEN TC 132/WG 15
9. Any other business
10. Next meeting



The Chairman of the Technical Committee, Mr. Bettencourt, welcomed those present, especially the guests: **Dr. D. Brodalla**, who was attending the Technical Committee meeting at the Austrian association's request, and **Mr. H. Sips**, who was now working in the Middle East and was ready to help promote the quality labels in that region of the world.

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2003

The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved.

2. Statistical report

Mr. Schoppig commented on the list of unsatisfactory inspections based on the reports received between 1 November 2003 and 31 May 2004. Six out of the 187 inspections (3.2%) had been negative, five due to the weight loss test. In the previous period (01.06.03.–31.10.03), seven out of 112 inspections (6.2%) had been negative, three due to the weight loss test.

QUALANOD'S Secretariat had compiled a list of all the weight loss values reported by the testing laboratories between 1 November 2003 and 31 May 2003 (white statistics). This list had been distributed to those present at the beginning of the session together with the yellow statistics (average); an illustrative chart was shown to those present.

Out of 187 measurements, five values exceeded the limit of 30 mg/dm² (versus 3 out of 112 in the previous period). During the latest period, there had been 3 extremely poor results (over 45 mg/dm²). In two cases, the national association's report and the track

record of the company concerned confirmed that the poor result could be considered an accident. In one case, the licence had been cancelled.

Mr. Boi reminded those present that, according to the minutes of the last meeting, the Technical Committee still had to take a decision on the relevancy of the average rule which had been questioned at several previous meetings. Mr. Arnoux explained once again why he wondered whether the rule set out in § 8.3.2 of the Specifications was relevant. He argued that, in practice, there was almost never a case of an average value over 26.0 mg/dm² because every negative weight loss test result was replaced by the measurement taken during the repeat visit.

Mr. Bettencourt pointed out that this average rule had been introduced to improve quality by pushing the anodizers to work better and more consistently. However, he was also fully aware that the rule was not really effective in practice.

The Technical Committee decided to advise the Executive Committee to remove the average rule from the QUALANOD Specifications and to drop the average statistics.

3. 2nd draft of the new Specifications

3.1 New proposals

Mr. Bettencourt commented on the second draft of the new Specifications, which had been prepared by the “Specifications” working group taking into account the remarks submitted by the national associations after the previous QUALANOD meeting.

This second draft, which had been sent to the national associations and committee members at the beginning of May 2004, included three new proposals. In the meantime, two other proposals had been added by the working group.

The Technical Committee members reviewed the new proposals one by one.

a) Complaints

- ◆ *Drop the “Customers’ complaints” paragraph in chapter 1 – General Information*
- ◆ *New § 3.1.6 Complaints: Any complaints by customers to anodizers must be made in writing. The anodizer must hold a register of complaints which includes actions taken.*
- ◆ *New § 5.1.1.8 Inspection of register of complaints – The inspector must check whether a register of complaints has been maintained and adequately describes how complaints have been investigated and actions taken.*

This proposal was unanimously approved.

b) Forming after anodizing: new text in chapter 1 – General Information:

Deformation after anodizing can locally damage the oxide film and reduce its resistance at these points depending on the bending radius. The effect on aesthetics may be most noticeable in external applications and for coloured products.

This proposal was unanimously approved.

c) Sealing time (UK's request)

On behalf of the British anodizers, Mr. Furneaux had proposed reducing the sealing time mentioned in paragraph 3.2.10 Sealing by hydrothermal treatment.

After a short discussion, the Technical Committee members finally agreed on the following text: "The time necessary to get a good sealing should be at least 2 minutes per micrometre unless there is a preseal."

d) Dye spot test (validity of solutions)

The following text had been proposed by the Specifications working group in collaboration with Dr. Sacco of Clariant:

"If the colorant solutions described in the standard EN 12373-4 are stored properly, they will remain stable for up to two years. However, their pH values should be checked every 3 months. If the pH of a solution is outside the range prescribed by the chemical supplier, then it should be discarded. The chemical supplier's instructions to prepare the solutions should be followed."

This proposal was unanimously adopted by the Technical Committee. However Clariant would be requested to approve this paragraph and provide a statement about the correct pH to be applied in the colorant solutions used to carry out the test.

e) APAL's request

As a representative of the Portuguese association, Mr. Bettencourt commented on APAL's request to add some text about payment for inspections in Appendix III. In this regard, the working group had also found that no reference was made to Appendix III in Chapter 5 and had therefore added a section 5.1.4 Contract with GL.

All the amendments submitted by the working group were accepted by the Technical Committee.

f) GAA's remarks

On behalf of the German association, Mr. Mader suggested some changes and additions:

- ◆ in section 3.1.1 "Material": a subtitle "Anodizing quality" instead of "Anodizing quality for rolled products"
- ◆ new Appendix VIII including a list of all the relevant standards with corresponding dates.

Both proposals were adopted by the Technical Committee. A cross reference to the new appendix would be added in Chapter 1 "General Information".

After a short discussion, the Technical Committee also approved Mr. Boi's recommendation to follow the standard which stated that there could be variations in appearance even in the same alloy.

In this connection, Mr. van den Heuvel thought that a list of alloy series should be incorporated as an appendix. He suggested asking AAC for the right to use its list. Mr. Mader added that a list of alloys for decorative appearance was also available. The Technical Committee Chairman agreed that this matter could be investigated further.

3.2 Final approval and date of implementation

The Technical Committee approved the 2nd draft of the Specifications, including all the amendments made at the meeting. The date of implementation would be **1 January 2005** to allow the national associations to finalise their translations in due time.

The Technical Committee also agreed that the new Specifications should be put in the "Members only" area of the QUALANOD website (with password). The members would be able to download two types of files: document with comments and a final blank issue.

An official hard copy of the English Specifications (master version signed by the General Secretary) would be sent to the national associations, committee members, direct members and testing laboratories by November 2004.

4. Assessment of a new alternative system for sealing anodized aluminium

The Secretariat had received a report on a new alternative system for sealing anodized aluminium. The testing laboratory had summarized the test results in a table which had been neutralized by the Secretariat and distributed to the Committee members at the beginning of the meeting.

The Technical Committee members reviewed the table and found that some important points needed clarification: What was the alternative product mentioned in the table as a reference? Had the thickness measurement been done correctly? What kind of criteria had been used for assessing the acetic salt spray test? Why had admittance been tested? What was the visual appearance?

It was furthermore noted that the procedure described in Appendix VII of the current edition of the Specifications had not been followed because there had been no official application and no technical data sheet sent to QUALANOD.

The testing laboratory would be asked to give more information about the test methods applied, and an official application including technical information would be requested from the producer.

5. Inspection report - ADAL's remarks and request

The use of the new inspection form had given rise to some reactions from the French anodizers. Mr. Arnoux commented on some items which seemed to be unrealistic and some items which should be dealt with by QUALANOD (cooling of the electrolyte, current supply, jigs, agitation of the electrolyte).

The French association suggested that a working group of anodizers be set up in order to read through the Specifications and inspection report again realistically with a view to dropping anything that was no longer current.

The Technical Committee fully endorsed this proposal, and the following gentlemen agreed to join the working group: E. Arnoux, J. Bettencourt, R. Boi, P. Lloret.

An initial report would be presented at the next QUALANOD meeting.

6. Modification of anodizing parameters: current density and temperature

Mr. Brodalla gave a presentation on some comparative investigations which had led to the finding that temperature and speed of growth, i.e. current density, correlated with the same electrolytes insofar as the same structural-chemical building blocks also arose in the same ratio. When work was carried out with higher current densities, i.e. to make the coating grow more rapidly, higher temperatures could also be permitted. Productivity could be increased significantly and energy saved through more efficient cooling.

Mr. Brodalla's recommendation was to set up a working group to study how the current density and temperature parameters could be widened.

The Technical Committee members thanked Mr. Brodalla for his very interesting presentation. They fully agreed that such findings were worth investigation. However, it was clear that the Technical Committee was not able to do such research on its own. Some delegates suggested contacting Prof. Terin, an expert of the University of Brussels, and also trying to obtain a financial contribution from the EU. Mr. Brodalla pointed out that practical experience on well known pilot anodizing lines was essential too.

The President of QUALANOD, Mr. Andersson, who was very interested in this matter, agreed to prepare a project in collaboration with Mr. Brodalla.

7. Preliminary meeting and visit to Coil by a QUALANOD delegation

Mr. Furneaux reported on the visit he had paid to the Belgian company together with MM. J. Bettencourt and R. Boi. Coil had four continuous anodizing lines, three of which were suitable for architectural purposes. The process was characterized by a high anodizing temperature and a much higher current density. A few differences had been pointed out in the control procedure, but Coil was ready to make the necessary modifications.

The QUALANOD delegation and the applicant had agreed to follow the procedure described in the appendix entitled "Assessment of New Products and Processes". A provisional approval could then be given after positive laboratory tests. Concurrently, a new appendix to the Specifications could be prepared for coil anodizing.

Mr. Buchholz reaffirmed that coil anodizing technology was completely different and that he did not see why the Specifications should be changed for just one company.

Mr. Bettencourt confirmed that all other European coil companies had already been contacted by letter. Up to now, one company had expressed some interest in QUALANOD.

The Technical Committee finally approved the working group's proposal that a provisional approval could be granted after positive laboratory tests. Concurrently, a new specification would be prepared following the instructions given by the working group.

8. Report on CEN TC 132/WG 15

Not used (see minutes of the Executive Committee meeting).

9. Any other business

None

10. Next meeting

Technical and Executive Committees:

Wednesday, 24 November 2004
in Zurich (Hotel SOFITEL)