



NLBMDA ALERT: Decision Issued on Proposed Southern Pine Design Values

The American Lumber Standard Committee's (ALSC) Board of Review (BoR) issued a decision yesterday on the revised design values for Southern Pine that had been proposed in October by the Southern Pine Inspection Bureau (SPIB). NLBMDA had raised serious concerns about the proposal, the method of adopting the changes, the impact on the marketplace, and the implications for planned revisions in the design values of other species of lumber.

Yesterday, the BoR only addressed the pending revision in design values for Southern Pine. Specifically the BoR decided:

1. That SPIB and Timber Products Inspection had not adhered to the proper ASTM standard (D-1990) for changing design values for all Southern Pine grades, which requires sampling at least two grades and at least three widths per grade, but did follow the process for the single grade and size No. 2 2x4's, so they approved the change only for No. 2 Southern Pine 2x4's.
2. That the BoR agreed with NLBMDA that an implementation period for the change was needed and set **June 1, 2012** as the date for the change in No. 2 2x4 design values.

The BoR did not address NLBMDA's concerns about the process for establishing revisions in design values for all species, several of which are currently under review. The Board's decision to approve the single grade and size was also contrary to the industry consensus that all in-grade testing pursuant to D-1990 should be completed and analyzed so that any necessary changes in design change could be made once and only once.

"NLBMDA worked diligently to achieve a better outcome than the one that was proposed last October and we believe this decision, while not perfect, will help avoid major disruptions in the marketplace," said NLBMDA President Michael O'Brien. "However, questions and uncertainty remain as to what the SPIB supplement to the grade rule will include and what emphasis will be given to the Board's recommended implementation date. NLBMDA will continue to work with ALSC and other industry stakeholders to minimize additional uncertainty relative to this decision and, going forward, to establish a more orderly and transparent process for changes in design values for all species of lumber."