

# STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE

June/July 2002

## An Air of Cooperation by Charlie Hoover, P.E., TPI President

A day was added to the Truss Plate Institute's (TPI) spring Board of Directors meeting to include a joint session meeting with WTCA's Executive Committee. This was a much-anticipated session by each association. It was a great opportunity for the association leaders to discuss issues critical to the metal plate connected truss industry. Both associations have strong influence and credential credibility in their areas of responsibility, which emphasizes the importance of working together in the best interests of the industry. We need to use our associations' strengths to better the industry, rather than losing focus when there is a question of which association should be leading a particular charge.

As the industry has matured, the needs of the truss manufacturer have expanded and changed. There are issues today that no one dreamed of 40 years ago when TPI was organized. At that time, the major concern was how to convince HUD, FHA and other regulatory bodies that trusses were a viable structural alternative to solid sawn rafters and joists. Today, such issues as spotted owls, a focus on molds, and protecting firefighters, avert our focus from technical issues like design loads and building code regulations, and threaten the survival of our products.

As WTCA expanded its leading role in supporting the truss manufacturers, TPI adjusted its role to focus on truss design methodology, testing and third party truss plant inspection. With these changing roles the lines of lead responsibility occasionally became blurred. Considering the mission of both organizations, some issues have the potential to overlap. The primary purpose of our meeting was to clear up the areas of confusion so we all can focus on continuously improving the metal plate connected truss industry.

Since TPI has a narrower scope, a "litmus test" to define those areas where TPI would take the lead, was proposed and accepted. Any activity that influences the truss design and is referenced by the truss drawing would be the responsibility of TPI.

Generally, the truss design methodology (whether it is the sealed design or the engineering software to create the design) originates from the TPI membership. TPI leads the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited consensus process to develop and maintain standards such as TPI-1-2002 (Metal Plate Connected Design Standard), and initiates changes and protects the industry by participating in and monitoring the development and approval of standards and codes that influence the design methodology.

An air of cooperation that was focused on addressing the issues that affect our industry highlighted the remainder of the meeting. It progressed very well, topics were discussed thoroughly, and to a resolution. Every meeting participant was attentive when others spoke and there was an overriding atmosphere of understanding. The group agreed we should continue to get together in conjunction with each TPI Board of Directors meeting. I was pleased and favorably impressed that this room of professional truss industry members focused on the needs

of the industry. Yes, there was healthy debate. However, egos and emotion were left outside the meeting door. That is a compliment to the dedication of this group.

As a united industry, let us continue the rapport and set out to convert the last of the rafters and joists to metal plate connected wood trusses.

---

[SBC HOME PAGE](#)

Copyright © 2002 by Truss Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. For permission to reprint materials from SBC Magazine, call 608/310-6706 or email [editor@sbcmag.info](mailto:editor@sbcmag.info).

The mission of Structural Building Components Magazine (SBC) is to increase the knowledge of and to promote the common interests of those engaged in manufacturing and distributing of structural building components to ensure growth and continuity, and to be the information conduit by staying abreast of leading-edge issues. SBC will take a leadership role on behalf of the component industry in disseminating technical and marketplace information, and will maintain advisory committees consisting of the most knowledgeable professionals in the industry. The opinions expressed in SBC are those of the authors and those quoted solely, and are not necessarily the opinions of any of the affiliated associations (SBCC, WTCA, SCDA & STCA).