

Cork County Fire & Building Control Authority



Making Building Control Work

I.B.C.I conference 2008

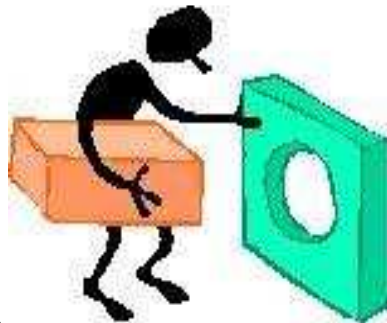
Martin Ryan, Building Control Officer



Overview - Taking Stock

~ 67 BC officers
(conference 07)

37 BC Authorities
(all different)



Regulations A → M

78,027 dwellings

~ 7,000 FSC

DAC & BER



Overview - BC System Considerations

- Organisation
- Staffing
- Management involvement
- Building Activity

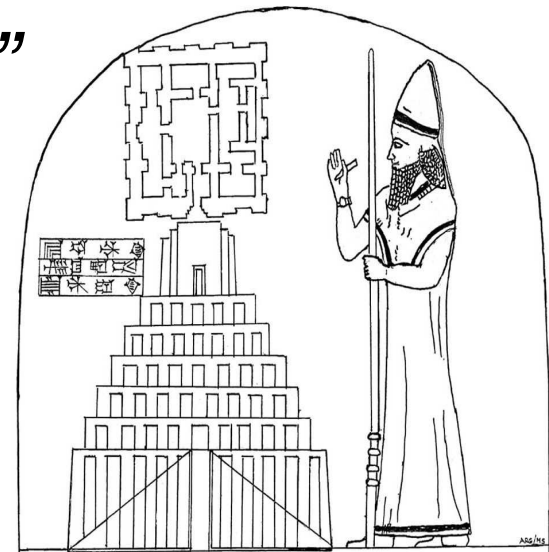
Design your BC system to suit your Authority



Babylonian BC system

“If a builder has built a house, and has not made his work sound, and the house he built has fallen, and caused the death of its owner, that builder shall be put to death.”

- Hammurabi



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~ 2003 ~

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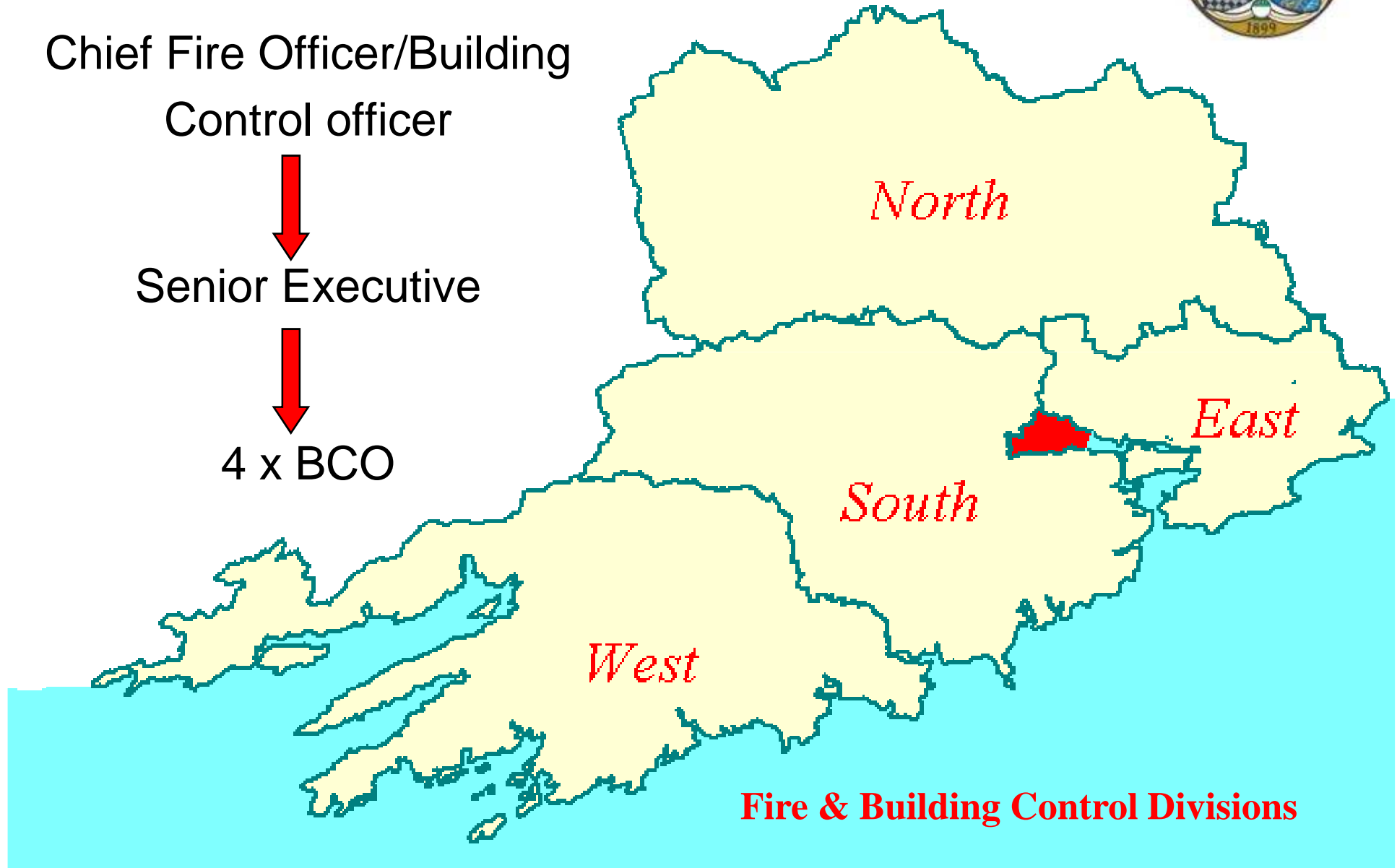
Chief Fire Officer/Building
Control officer



Senior Executive



4 x BCO



Fire & Building Control Divisions

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Population = 361,877 (2006)

Laois, Louth, Longford, Kilkenny,
Offaly, Westmeath, Carlow = 371,143

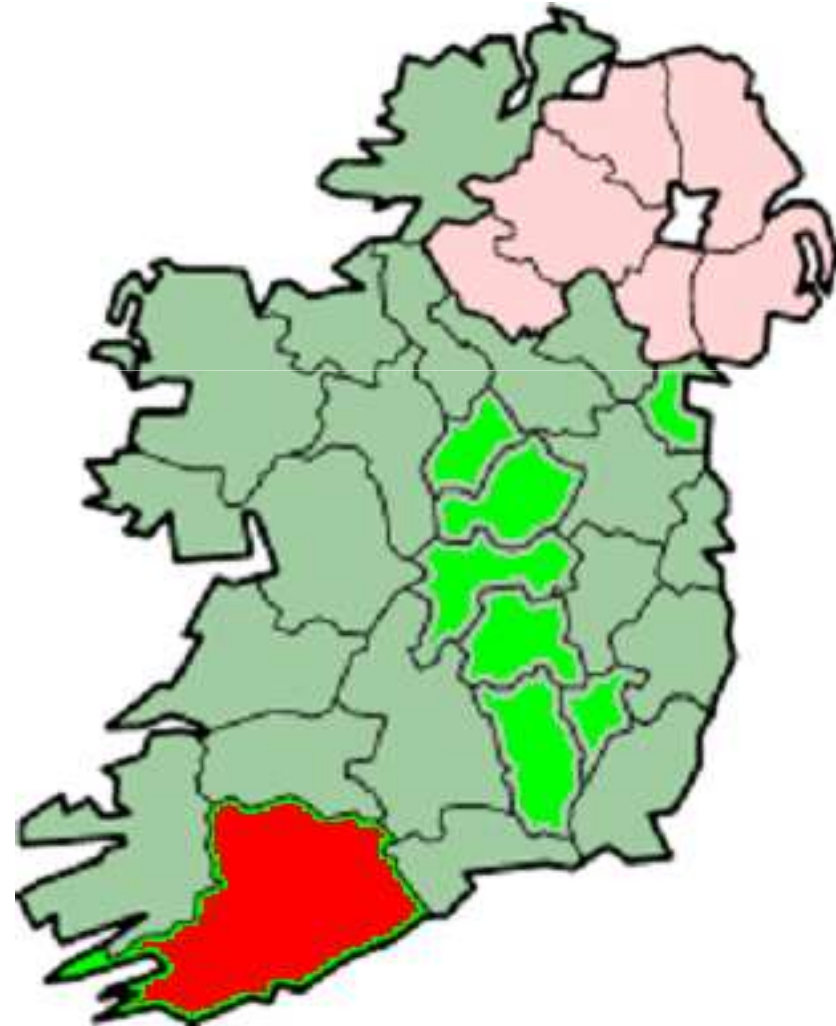
Commencement Notices

2006 = 8,153 buildings

(~10 % national total)

= 2,038 buildings per BCO

block of 60 apartments = 1 building
Repeat inspections don't count



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Initial Problems

- **No culture of Building Control**
- **Need to establish site credibility**





1

**Inspection Targets
12 – 15 %**

What should you inspect ?



Inspection Regime

– get bang for your buck

Building Type	affects many people	Gives good inspection statistics	General importance
Estates	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓
Apartments	✓		✓
Single house			
Assembly	✓		✓
office	✓		✓
industrial			
<i>Repeat inspections</i>		zero	✓



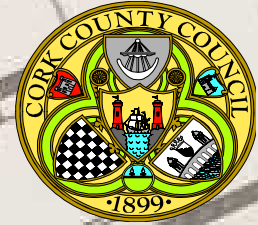
Quality over Quantity

➤ *Encourage future compliance*



- Use Fire Certs
- Good Records





Review of Drawings

- *Fire Certs*
- *Plannings*

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- *Drawings may change*
- *Does not count as an inspection*



2

Dealing with technical advisors (*Architects & Engineers*)

*Who has the best chance of
resolving BC problems ?*



The enforceable parties should instruct their technical advisors

Reasons why dealings with advisors can fail

- Not retained for construction stage
- Not allowed to fix the problem
- Unwilling to address their own design errors



Building Relationships

- Prove competence
- Always follow up

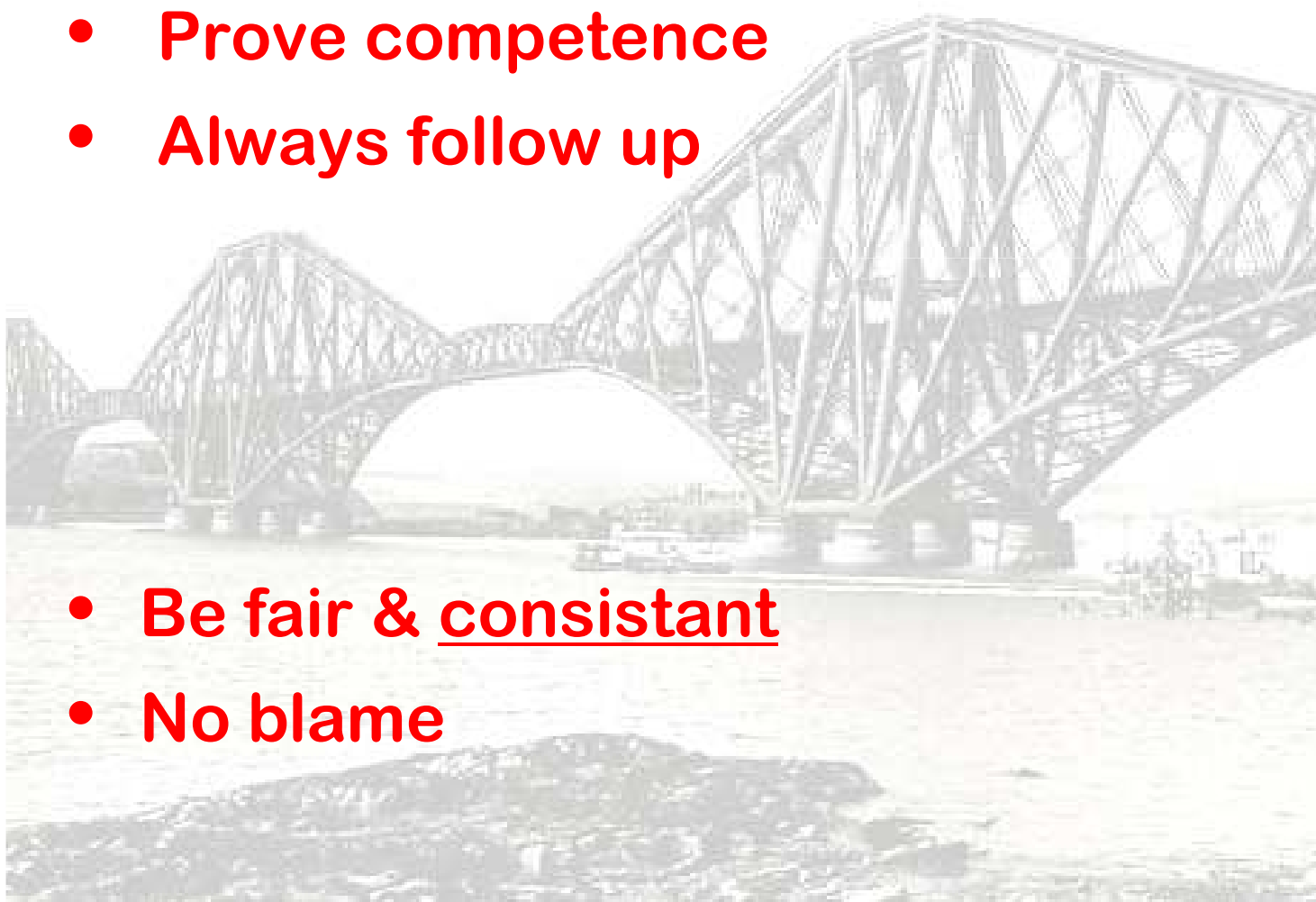


Tough but fair

- Be fair & consistant
- No blame



Good Cops



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Enforcement Notices

Should we serve more ?



Enforcement Notices



**- A failure to
convince the
parties that they
are wrong**



Chances for Compliance

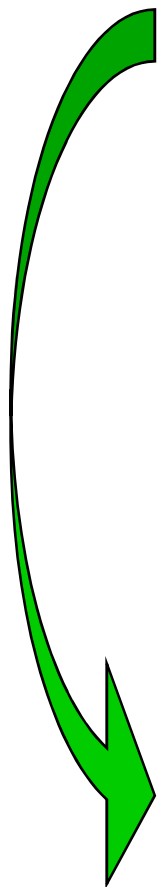
✘ Initial inspection

➤ initial letter *(giving 2 weeks)*

➤ Overdue letter(s) *(giving 1 week)*

➤ Phone calls & Clarification letters

✔ Re-inspection & Compliance





Heading for Enforcement Action



- Pre-enforcement letter - *Warn of consequences*
- Pre-enforcement inspection - *Final check & meeting*



Consequences of Enforcement

“once an Enforcement Notice is issued on a premises, it is added to a permanent register, which is available to the public.

You may wish to bring this fact to the attention of your legal & technical advisors”



See Part IV - Building Control Regulations

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4 Engaging With Owners

Is this fair ? Does it work ?

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**The enforceable parties should
always be kept informed**

All official letters sent to owners & builders.

(Registered Post)



Owners – innocent, interested, liable ?

- Vested interest in compliance – *it's their property*
- Must let builder comply
- Right to know
- They Control money



Party Wall – post sign off !



Why owners care about Building Regulations # 1

Your fire alarm system has not been interlinked.



You may not get sufficient warning of a fire downstairs.

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Why owners care about Building Regulations # 2

~ Increased Costs ~

Your insulation is
installed poorly

You will have to pay higher
heating bills

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Why owners care about Building Regulations # 3

Exactly how tall was the
Engineer who signed off
on your house ? ?

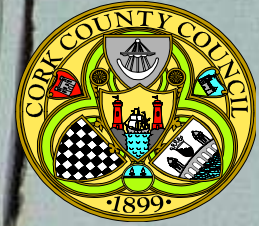


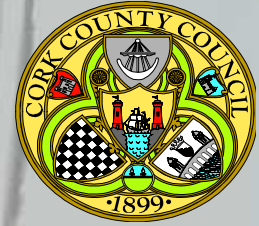
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Addressing Problems

*Its not what question you ask,
- Its how you ask the question*

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Set out exactly what you think is wrong

- ✓ **Keep everyone focused on the exact problem**
 - **Avoids misunderstandings**
 - **Reduces wriggle room.**



Black & white or shades of grey ?

Always Refer back to TGD or Standards

- ✓ Gives you back up & Eliminates arguments
- ✓ Puts burden of proof on *them*



Typical Standard Clause

Requirement K1 - Stairways, Ladders and ramps

Paragraph 1.1.14 of Technical Guidance Document K provides guidance on the design of landings to stairways so as to ensure the safe passage for the users of a building.

..... sets out the importance

It states that a door opening on to a landing should be so positioned that there will be a clear space of at least the full width of the flight between the door swing and the flight.

... What the guidance advises.

It *appeared* on site that the stairway leading to the 1st floor canteen was not in accordance with the above *guidance* as there did not *appear* to be adequate clear space between the top of the stair and the swing of the door

...

..... setting out what they APPEAR to have done wrong



TGD are guidance only

Other valid means of compliance -

- Agrément certificates,
- Irish & European Standards,
- Calculations



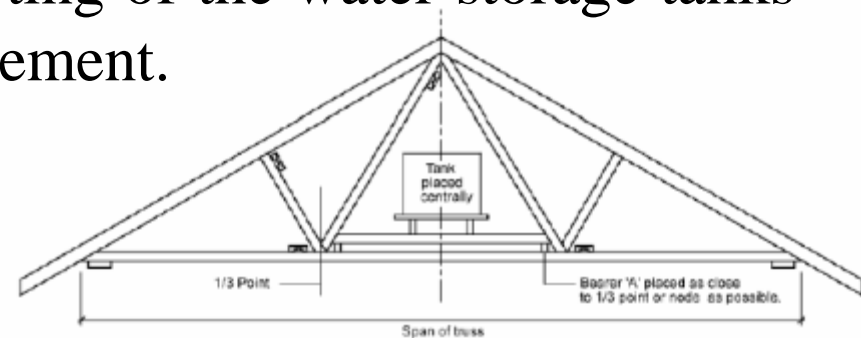


Quoting from the Standards

Requirement A1 - Structure (Loading)

It appeared on site that the cold water storage tanks were not supported in accordance with Paragraph 12.6.2 and Figure 7 of I.S. 193 2006 as.....

Please provide details of your design to support the water tanks together with either **calculations or certification from the truss manufacturer** to prove that the supporting of the water storage tanks is in accordance with the above requirement.

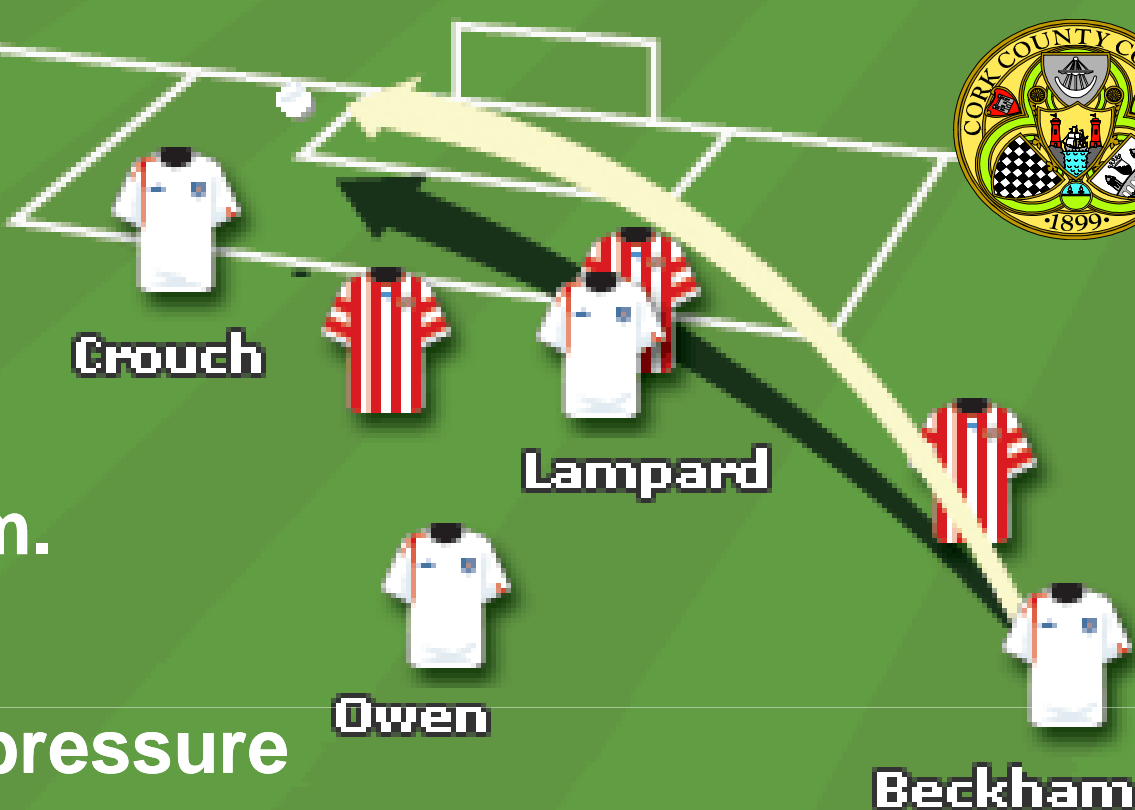
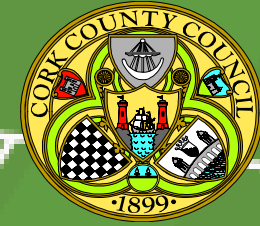




Attaching Photographs to letters

Will this party wall
resist fire for 1 hour ?

Our Tactics



⚽ Professionalism.

⚽ Put 'em under pressure

(keep onus for compliance on them)

⚽ The goal is compliance not enforcement.

⚽ Get builders & designers on your team

⚽ Bring owners into play – *it's their property*

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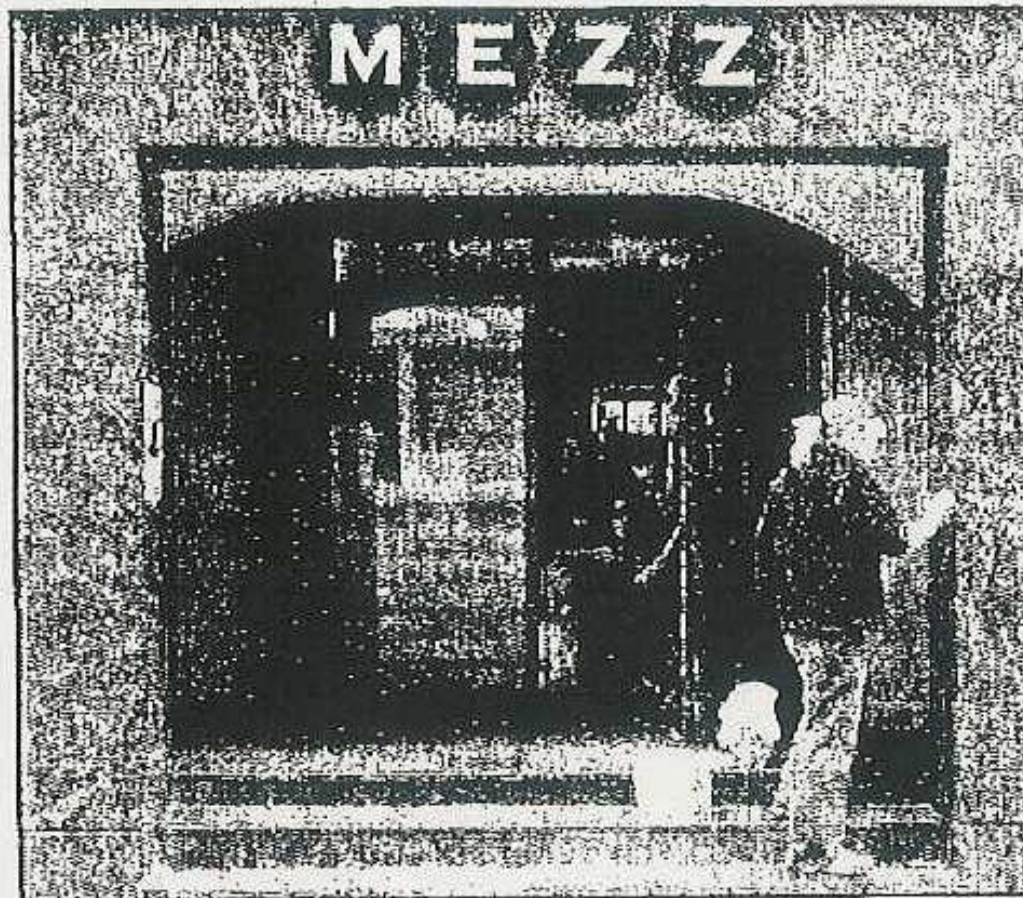


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Future Factors



Anger over pub's false
toilet for disabled people



Disability Access Certificates

- Major Staff implications
- Format of DAC ?



Energy Rating Certificates

Will certs match reality ?

(who checks ?)

What is the role of BC ?

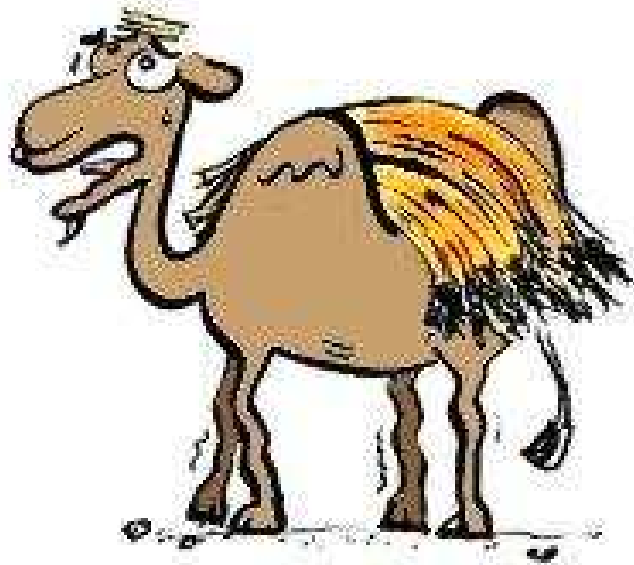
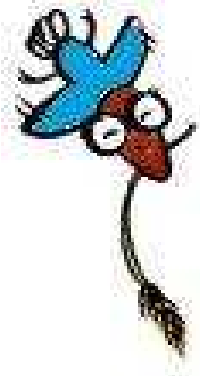
- ? Increased inspections
- ? Local authority buildings
- ? Guidance & Advice



Impact of BER on BC

“ It is anticipated that any additional costs arising can be met from within existing budgets ”

- Regulatory Impact Assessment of Part L 2007



- 2,000 assessors vrs 67 BCO
- 78,027 buildings
 - Air pressure testing
 - Evaluation of new systems



Building Control : Potential

- Monitor & enforce compliance
- Provide guidance & assistance
- Promote Government Agenda

(e.g. Part L & M)



To Infinity and beyond



Building Control : Needs

- Adequate numbers of officers
- Dedicated resources & career structure
- Coordination at a national level



To Infinity and beyond

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**Yes Bob, I know
you can build it but
who will check it ?**

Thank You.

