

Editorial

In January this year, Rubberfuse celebrated its 5th anniversary. This milestone provided the opportunity to look back and evaluate the progress we made: starting with a mere 100.000 m² of roofing systems sold in 1995 to a handfull of top level applicators who were prompt to see the advantages offered by the FPA membrane, Rubberfuse has kept on pioneering year after year. The synthetic membrane division of Imper Italia has since gained market recognition and Sintofoil is now an established leading TPO membrane. A clear sign of such recognition is the list of customers which includes a growing number of large multinational groups. Needless to say, these companies are known to be very demanding: when it comes to selecting a supplier, they accept only the best! So, we are proud to introduce our first list of "big names", with all our thanks for their confidence to: AB Vasilopoulos, Asda Stores, Audi, BAA, Bauhaus, Baumax, BBC, Boehringer, Carrefour, Catesa, Coca Cola, Crédit Agricole, Dow, Esso, Haribo, Hornbach, Ibis, IDI Pharma, La Redoute, Makro, Michelin, Nissan, Norwich Union, Obi, Panasonic, Porsche, RailTrack, Roca, St Gobain, San Miguel, Seat, Shell, Sommer Allibert, Tesco, Tibbett-Britten, Unilever, Valeo, Virgin, Vodaphone, Volvic, Wabco. As Rubberfuse is a "born winner", we are confident this list will rapidly expand!

Launch in Belgium

The Rubberfuse distribution network keeps growing! We are pleased to announce the formal start of activities in Belgium. Our partner is BMB, a company with a vast experience in synthetic membranes. A leader in wall and cladding technology using EPDM strips, BMB has decided to extend its activities and promote Sintofoil FPA in the roofing market.

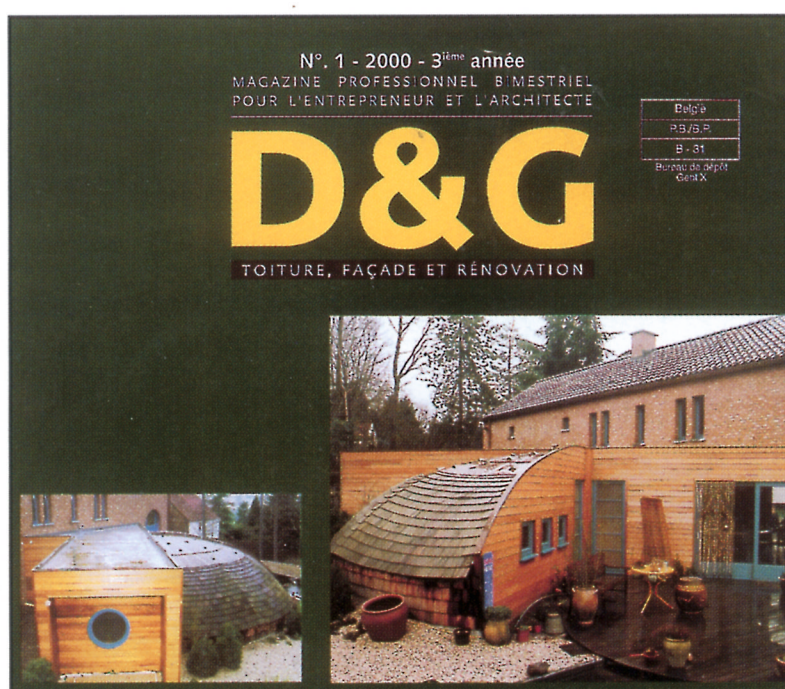
The first step of the new operations was to establish the application base, as synthetic membranes systems have to be installed by experts to properly perform. After many contacts and presentations, six specialised contracting firms decided to join and form the Rubberfuse application team. Strategically located in Flanders, Wallonia and the Brussels region, they offer an appropriate geographic coverage. BMB also took the opportunity of the applicators training sessions organised in Brussels to cover the extension of their premises with Sintofoil. Three different systems were installed, so the roof will be used as a show case during presentations and other meetings with architects or building owners.



Sintofoil on BMB's roof

On the "certification front", the necessary actions have been taken to meet the local requirements: a fire test in accordance with the prEN1447 norm has been successfully carried out at Gent University's testing facility and the procedure aimed at obtaining UBAtc approval has been initiated.

J. Humbert, BMB's managing director is enthusiastic: "we sure realise there is a long way to go, as Belgians are known to be quite conservative. But Rubberfuse systems meet the demand for quality, environmentally friendly and competitive systems. Immediately after their training, some applicators already won and successfully completed a few jobs. And quite amazingly, Sintofoil already made the front page of D&G, the Belgian roofing magazine. The article insists on how clean and neat the Rubberfuse system is. All this is encouraging. There is a challenge but we feel confident in winning".



Sintofoil makes D&G's front page

Rubberfuse cited in CPD

Environmental concern in the UK is a major issue. Professionals in the construction industry are continually being asked by clients: "Is your material environmentally friendly? Is it recyclable?"

IPS (UK) are capitalising on such questions. After six hard months of research and study, followed by independent academic assessment, they have been awarded recognition by The Construction CPD Certification Service, for their unique seminar entitled "Building A Greener Environment".

CPD means "Continuous Professional Development". It is a term used to describe the further learning that professionals in the construction industry are obliged to undertake throughout their career path. An estimated 400.000 plus professionals have to undergo between 25-30 hours of CPD presentations a year. What this means is that the main users of CPD, for example architects, invite CPD presenters like IPS into their practices to make their presentation. All presentations have to have an educational bias, but the opportunity to market the Rubberfuse systems always presents itself at the end of each seminar.

The focus of IPS' presentation is about raising an awareness of environmental issues. This leads to persuading them to specify more environmentally friendly building materials, and highlights Rubberfuse - the environmentally friendly single ply roofing systems - as a classic example.

Peter Bowers, the Managing Director of IPS, says "All the hard work and effort by the team who put this presentation together is beginning to pay off.

In the past we were asking architects if we could visit them now it is the other way around, it is they who are asking us to visit them; the response has been amazing."



IPS's CPD briefing notes

Sintofoil covers Greek sportshalls

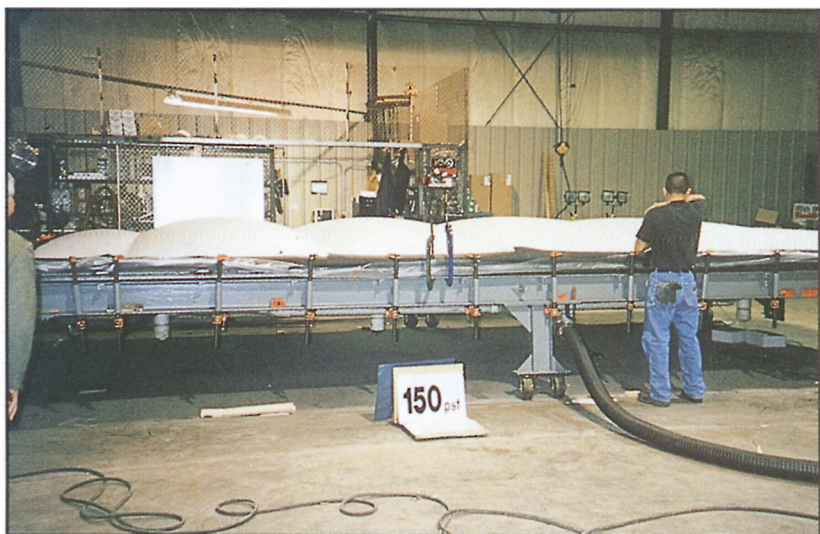
Sportshalls usually are very light structures. Therefore the roofing system has to be carefully selected to withstand pressures generated by the wind forces, taking also into account how the construction responds to these pressures.

For the prestigious PAOK sportshall in Thessaloniki, where the final tour of the European Basketball Cup took place last month, and the new sportshall of Patras, Rubberfuse mechanically attached system was the obvious choice. Both jobs were installed by Ergotech, Rubberfuse applicator since 1995. With 70 people, including 10 specialised engineers and equipped with the most advanced welding machines, Ergotech is a leading company in waterproofing technology in Greece. Over 150.000m² of Sintofoil membrane have so far been installed by Ergotech. Rubberfuse references include Makro, Sklavenitis and AB Vasilopoulos supermarkets, hospitals in Pyrgos and Serres, Intercom and several buildings at the new Athens airport.



FM Certification underway

As part of the current trend for improved quality in the construction industry, an increasing number of specifications for industrial buildings call for Factory Mutual certification. Imper Italia therefore initiated a testing program at FM's facilities in Putnam (USA). The build-up of the first system to go under test was Sintofoil RC mechanically secured to Kingspan's PU Termaroom board and PE vapour barrier on steel deck. For such system, FM's maximum rating issued for wind uplift resistance is I-90. The Rubberfuse system was actually interrupted at 165 psf ! " This system is quite overdesigned " said a technician attending the test. The test for second system is being prepared. The build-up is Sintofoil ST mechanically secured to Rockwool board on steel deck. Both systems will then be subject to the remaining part of the program ie fire, hail and traffic tests. More to follow.



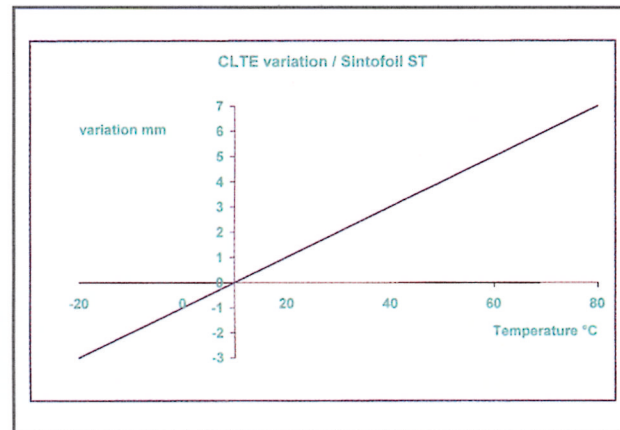
Ciatesa in Spain - a great ST reference.

Why Sintofoil ST ?

When first introduced in Europe, in 1993, the FPA membrane was available in one version only eg homogeneous (non-reinforced), today called ST (standard). Such approach was based on a very simple fact : this type of membrane is suitable for most roofing systems : loose-laid/ballasted of course but also mechanically attached. As the membrane is inert, no reinforcement is required to maintain its initial performances on the long term. Within the last 6 years, over 1.5 million m² of ST membranes have successfully been installed in more than 20 countries, from freezing Denmark to hot Spain. Also interesting to note : ST has been installed on 80% of the 50 largest Rubberfuse projects. Competition, mostly PVC mechanically attached systems, have noticed the penetration of FPA in the market and are now developing a strategy to protect their current share. One of the main argument used is to try convincing users that any synthetic roofing membrane, regardless its nature, has to be reinforced. This statement is supported by comments on low stability resulting in uneasy welding and poor aesthetics (wrinkles). The issue needs to be addressed at two levels.

Test results.

As the coefficient of linear thermal expansion (CLTE) value of Sintofoil ST measured between -20°C and +80°C is 10×10^{-5} , the corresponding linear variation of the sheet after assembly at 10°C does not exceed 1mm/10°C. It is also important to note that the variation is totally reversible and therefore does not affect the long term performance of the membrane: after UV and high temperature aging, Sintofoil ST retains over 95% of its original properties. Furthermore, using ST membrane allows to take advantage of its high elongation capacity (>700%) to cope with eventual substrate movements.



News from Mappano

The upgrade program of the Rubberfuse training centre is underway. The first step, aiming at providing each trainee with his own complete mock-up and tooling kit, is achieved. The next step will be the relocation of the centre in a brand new, dedicated building, which will include hands-on areas, seminar rooms, cafeteria and other amenities. This confirms Imper Italia's determination to offer optimal service to the Rubberfuse applicators network.



Dutch applicators attending a session

Field service

Vast field experience and work with crews specialised in application of homogeneous membranes have enabled our technical staff to master ST membrane field assembly, resulting in quality installation with reduced wrinkling under temperature change. Field tips can be summarized as follows : good quality insulation boards, adequate welding equipment and properly trained applicators.

In conclusion : Sintofoil ST is a valid, proven and competitive option for loose-laid/ballasted and mechanically attached roofing systems. We will however reckon that for specific customers having a clear concern about aesthetics, Sintofoil FB or RC are adequate options.



Pulling ST membrane before fixing.

Last minute

A Rubberfuse mechanically attached system using a new type of " thermal shut " fixings has been tested at CSTC (Belgium) for wind uplift resistance. Sintofoil ST on Rockwool Taurox C on steel deck achieved over 5.500Pa on the 2.1m x 2.2m table, corresponding to a permissible load per fixing of 580N according to CSTB calculation norms. More details on request.

QC Corner

Seam welding is a most important step during the installation of a Rubberfuse system. As part of the usual field quality control program, it is essential to probe all seams on a daily basis. To properly execute the operation, it is recommended to use the adequate tool. The seam probing tool as shown on the picture is now available as part of the Rubberfuse accessories line.



Fire testing program

In order to meet specific fire requirements, Imper Italia's Rubberfuse Division has taken the necessary steps to offer a range of fire rated Sintofoil membranes. So far, Testing Certification has been obtained from the following Authorities :

WFRC	United Kingdom	BS 476 :Part 3	EXT.FAA
IHUM	Germany	DIN 4102 Teil I	B2
FMPA	Germany	DIN 4102 Teil 7	passed
LCPPP	France	NF P 92-53	M3
SINTEF	Norway	NT Fire 006	Ta
LABW	Belgium	prEN 1447.1	passed

Further programs are underway, namely

BDA/Intron	Holland	NEN 6063
FM	USA	E 108

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