

09 January 2008

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### **Approval of the Stroma Accreditation Ltd Accreditation Application for an Accreditation Scheme for Energy Assessors**

Thank you for your application of 22 December 2007 for approval as an Accreditation Scheme for Energy Assessors of public buildings, newly constructed dwellings, non-dwellings and existing domestic properties.

I am pleased to write to advise you that the Secretary of State considers that your application to operate an Accreditation Scheme for Energy Assessors satisfies the conditions set out in regulation 25(3) of the Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) Regulations (SI 2007/991) as amended and regulation 17F(3) of the Building regulations 2000 as amended of which she must be satisfied before approving any accreditation scheme.

#### Terms used in this letter

1. In this letter:

“the Department” means the Department for Communities and Local Government and its officials, and includes any successor organisation;

“the Regulations” means the Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007 (S.I. 2007/991) and regulation 17F(3) of the Building regulations 2000 as amended;

“the Scheme” means Stroma Accreditation Ltd;

“Secretary of State” means the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and includes any successor to that title;

#### Conditions of final approval

2. The Secretary of State reserves the right to vary the conditions of approval at any time upon reasonable notice in writing.
3. Where Stroma Accreditation Ltd fails or ceases to comply with the following conditions, the approval granted in this letter may be withdrawn by the Secretary of State:
  - a. The application by Stroma Accreditation Ltd of 22 November, including any supplementary information provided to the Department, is true and accurate;
  - b. The Scheme will operate as assured by that application or any subsequent agreed variations;
  - c. If unforeseen circumstances mean that the Scheme is unable to operate as assured, Stroma Accreditation Ltd will use its best endeavours to fully inform the Department as soon as reasonably practicable;
  - d. The Scheme will act in good faith, in an open and transparent manner in its dealings with the Secretary of State and the Department, and within the spirit of mutual co-operation;
  - e. The Scheme will notify the Department promptly of all relevant matters of concern to it and keep such matters confidential;
  - f. Where the Scheme is unable to agree any matter with the Secretary of State or the Department it should aim to resolve the matter without recourse to legal proceedings and in a confidential manner and where appropriate through mutually appointed arbitration or conciliation service;
  - g. The Scheme will not comment publicly on its relationship with the Government without first consulting the Department;
  - h. The Scheme will not disclose any information confidential to the Government. In particular, it will not disclose proposals for or the development of Government policy, or details of meetings with Ministers or officials;
  - i. The Scheme will comply with all legal requirements that apply to it, and in particular, it will comply with the requirements of the Regulations;
  - j. The Scheme will co-operate in relation to any reasonable research relating to energy performance certificates which is conducted by or on behalf of the Government;
  - k. The Scheme will comply with all reasonable requests for information made by or on behalf of the Government;

- l. The Scheme will inform the Department promptly and in writing of any matters which affect its continuing suitability for approval, and of any material changes or expansion in its business;
  - m. Neither the Scheme nor any associated businesses will do anything to bring the Government or its policies into disrepute;
  - n. The Scheme acknowledges the Crown's intellectual property rights in the standard form for energy performance certificates;
  - o. The Scheme will comply with the reporting and monitoring requirements set out by the Department;
  - p. The Scheme will notify the Department in advance and in writing of the date and agenda for planned meetings of its Board at which matters relating to the Scheme will be discussed, and will invite a representative to attend such meetings as an observer;
  - q. The Scheme will provide the Department with written minutes of any unplanned or emergency meetings of its Board at which matters relating to the Scheme are to be discussed.
  - r. The Scheme will obtain approval for software that is used in the production of energy performance certificates and recommendation reports.
4. The Department considers Quality Assurance to be a key factor in meeting its public responsibilities and will want to work closely with schemes to set up an appropriate framework.

As part of this approval the scheme shall, within a reasonable time (but not more than three months from the date of this approval), supply a statement of the Quality Assurance regime to be adopted during the term of this approval together with a draft quality management plan.


When agreed by the Department, the Quality Plan shall be incorporated within the terms of this approval. Notwithstanding that the Quality Plan will have been seen and agreed by the Department, the Scheme shall be solely responsible for the accuracy, suitability and applicability of the Quality Plan.

The Scheme shall provide the Department access as required for the purposes of monitoring performance and quality audit.

5. The Department will wish to discuss appropriate forms of governance with the Scheme. CLG will be setting up appropriate forums and schemes will be expected to participate fully in the arrangements made.
6. The Scheme acknowledges that unauthorised disclosure of EPCs or any information derived from an EPC is a criminal offence under regulation 14 of the Regulations.

7. The Department will be seeking early bilateral discussions with the Scheme about its plans. In addition, CLG will set up a meeting later this month involving all of the successful schemes. The issues to be discussed will include governance, QA, communications and forward planning. The meeting will also provide an opportunity for schemes to meet the commercial register operator. You will be contacted shortly with details of the time and date of that meeting.
8. This approval remains subject to CLG:
  - reviewing and agreeing with you and all other proposed accreditation schemes the detail of your proposed APEL arrangements in order to ensure that they are rigorous and fit for purpose;
  - reserving the right to introduce an independent APEL quality assurance regime applicable to all accreditation schemes. Possible arrangements for this will form part of the above review meeting;
  - implementing any amendments to your proposed APEL approach as a result of outcomes of the above meeting.
9. Should you require any further information please contact Simon Davis at:

[simon.davis@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:simon.davis@communities.gsi.gov.uk) (020 7944 5633)



**Colin Byrne**  
**HIP Programme Director**