

# Recommended Test Procedures for Access Floors Introduction

The publication of CISCA Recommended Test Procedures for Access Floors by the Ceilings & Interior Systems Construction Association (CISCA) represents a significant milestone in establishing a common basis of accepted test methods.

This document is intended to benefit contractors, specifiers, users, and manufacturers. By providing an accepted frame of reference for access floor testing, product characteristics can be judged in a fair context of industry-approved uniform test methods.

CISCA's intent is to provide a method for evaluating access floor characteristics, not criteria requirements. Because differing circumstances demand a range of performance levels, both manufacturers and users benefit from a variety of types of access floors in the marketplace. CISCA is strongly committed to developing test procedures that will appropriately address other performance factors related to all types of access floors.

It is essential, however, that product comparisons be based upon commonly used tests for valid results. These procedures have now been established in an industry-wide spirit of cooperation to achieve our common goal.

## History

CISCA's involvement with access floor test procedures began in 1983, when interior contractor Jim Whittaker, Chairman of the CISCA Seismic Committee, proposed that the manufacturers meet and recommend changes to the Uniform Building Code (UBC). The International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO) then incorporated the CISCA-recommended changes into the 1985 UBC.

When the access floor manufacturers met again in May 1985, this time with the intention of developing a fair method of measurement for concentrated and rolling loads on access floors, the CISCA Access Floor Committee was born. The Committee agreed to develop test methods, not criteria; and further agreed that testing should be done by independent laboratories.

Over the next year, drafts of proposed test procedures were circulated to all known access floor manufacturers for review and comment. In 1987, The CISCA Board agreed to adopt the documents as CISCA's recommended test procedures and to encourage manufacturers to test their access floor products in this manner and report the data on the approved forms. The procedures were approved and published in July 1987.

In 2003, the CISCA Access Floor Committee reconvened to address changes in the marketplace. The committee agreed to tackle the task in two phases. In phase one, immediate issues were addressed and an updated version of Recommended Test Procedures for Access Floors was approved by CISCA's Board of Directors and reprinted in April 2004.

For phase two, the committee went back to work to address the more difficult issues as well as changes in the marketplace. The final document was submitted for approval to the Board of Directors in April 2007.

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Testing procedures were established for concentrated load, ultimate load, rolling loads, stringer load, pedestal axial load, pedestal overturning moment, uniform load, drop impact load, fire performance and air leakage. These test procedures are user-oriented and represent sound engineering principles.

## Interpretation of Test Results

No particular testing agency is recommended for these tests. Manufacturers are encouraged to select appropriate independent laboratories to test and certify test results.

Because sound engineering principles were used to develop the testing procedures, there should be no requirements to retest components for use in specific installations. For example, pedestals will be tested at the maximum design height; if pedestals are used at lower floor heights, there is no need to retest to assure the desired performance for that lower height. Further, system load tests will be performed utilizing bare panels, eliminating the need to test with each of the wide variety and thicknesses of wearing surfaces utilized in actual installations.

### Note regarding the use and priority of units of measure:

All units of measure are expressed Inch/Pounds (in/lb) units, with the corresponding SI (Metric) units noted parenthetically. The in/lb units are to be treated as authoritative. Test results conducted pursuant to these procedures may be expressed in either unit, at the option of the proponent.