

Seminar on Structural Timber Design

- ENGLISH VERSION ONLY -

UCAPAN PERASMIAN
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SEMPENA MAJLIS PERASMIAN
SEMINAR ON STRUCTURAL TIMBER DESIGN
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KUALA LUMPUR

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Selamat Pagi, Salam Sejahtera dan Salam 1Malaysia.

Terlebih dahulu saya ingin mengucapkan terima kasih kepada pihak penganjur seminar iaitu Lembaga Perindustrian Kayu Malaysia (MTIB) kerana sudi menjemput saya untuk menyampaikan ucapan dan seterusnya merasmikan Seminar on Structural Timber Design pada pagi ini.

Saya juga ingin mengucapkan tahniah dan syabas kepada jawatankuasa penganjur kerana telah mengambil inisiatif untuk terus mengadakan seminar seumpama ini yang akan membincangkan aspek berkaitan penggunaan kayu untuk kegunaan struktur, khususnya sektor pembinaan, di samping mempromosikan produk baru berkejuruteraan tinggi seperti Glued Laminated Timber (Glulam) yang berpotensi untuk diperluaskan penggunaannya di dalam sektor pembinaan.

Saya juga berasa bangga dengan penyertaan Seminar yang menggalakkan ini, khususnya penyertaan dari kalangan 'specifiers' seperti arkitek dan jurutera, serta pegawai-pegawai dari Jabatan Kerja Raya. Saya berpendapat bahawa seminar ini dianjurkan pada masa yang tepat memandangkan industri berasaskan kayu merupakan salah satu industri yang menyumbang secara intensif dalam kepenggunaan kayu di pasaran domestik selain daripada pasaran eksport.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First and foremost, I wish to thank the organizer, Malaysian Timber Industry Board (MTIB), for giving me this opportunity and honour to officiate this Seminar on Structural Timber Design. I would also like

to wish special welcome to all invited guests, speakers and participants to the opening ceremony of this seminar.

2. Timber industry plays an important role in the country's export earnings with exported timber and timber products worth RM19.5 billion in 2009. Malaysia now enjoys the recognition as a major supplier of wood-based panels as well as furniture products. Exports of both plywood and wooden furniture in 2009 totalled RM5.0 billion and RM6.3 billion respectively. In this regard, I wish to congratulate MTIB and the other Government agencies for their role in facilitating the growth of this sector.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. While the timber industry has been performing credibly, albeit and slight hiccup during recessionary periods, the use of timber in the domestic market is facing several challenges. The annual market size of timber in the domestic front is approximately RM7.6 billion. The largest consumer of timber in the domestic market is the housing and construction sector. Here, sawn timber is the major product used. We have experienced the decline in use of timber in constructions due to inroads made by alternatives materials. One of the reasons is lack of information amongst specifiers in Malaysia. As a result, timber is often seen in negative light.

4. Specifiers of today, especially the younger generations are also concerned about the sustainability of the resource. Contrary to common understanding, greater use of wood products actually helps to stimulate the expansion of forest and green house gas emissions by substituting for fossil fuel intensive products. Malaysians in general must understand this fundamental fact. Hence, the wider use of timber may lead the way forward to a sustainable environment in a coherent and integrated manner to ensure a better quality of life towards brighter world for our future generations.

5. Towards this end, I wish to laud the efforts of the Pertubuhan Arkitek Malaysia (PAM) for launched the Malaysian Green Building Index (GBI) in April 2009. GBI is a rating system that provides a comprehensive framework to evaluate the environmental impact and performance of buildings. Buildings had awarded the GBI Malaysia based on six key criteria such as energy efficiency, indoor environmental quality, sustainable site planning, material and resources, water efficiency and innovation. The timber industry should take note of such imminent trends. I would like to urge the timber industry to view these developments as opportunities for greater utilization of timber.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. With the availability of new technology, the timber industry has successfully introduced the building industry as a whole range of engineered materials and components. These materials and components have proven to be highly competitive building products. I was encouraged to know that engineered timber products such Glue-Laminated Timber (Glulam) and Laminated Veneer Lumder (LVL) are excellent materials for structural applications. The success of this technology has been so spectacular especially in western countries which it is predicted that the market for these products will grow by at least ten times within the next decade.

7. Glulam is an extremely strong material and possesses architecturally pleasing features for prestige projects in developed markets. It have offers several benefits and flexibilities for innovative timber designs such as for curved beam, portal frames bridges, pillars, trusses, marine decking and other structural applications. I was informed that glulam is the fastest growing structural material in United Kingdom and has been chosen for almost every kind of building such as hotel, swimming pool, stadium and bridges.

8. In terms of cost, glulam timber beams are competitive compared with other structural materials. The lower weight of glulam system was leads to savings on foundations, transport and erection. In spite of these advantages that have been demonstrated through numerous R&D and actual applications, it has just made inroads into Malaysia. I was informed that a few entrepreneurs have ventured into the manufacture of engineered timber products. In this regard, I would like to urge the R&D institutions such as MTIB and FRIM to provide the necessary technical support services to promote this sector.

9. Here, I would also like to announce that MTIB is now establishing a timber building to showcase the use of glulam which were located in Mukim Tebrau, Johor. This will be the iconic commercial building and pioneering the use of structured glulam. I am glad that the architect involved in designing the MTIB glulam building is with us today. I hope concrete steps will be undertaken by the agencies under my Ministry to promote this material to the construction industry.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

10. I am also pleased to note that Malaysian manufacturers are recognised internationally as producers of high quality products. As world trade become more competitive, compliance to standards and technical regulations, it becomes a critical business issue. Today, it is a fact of life that the ability to comply swiftly with changes to standards, regulations and other codes are important to ensure continued market access.

11. MTIB has been appointed as a Standard Writing Organisation (SWO) for timber and timber products since 1999 by SIRIM Berhad. In discharging this responsibility, MTIB is involved in the development of standards for timber and timber products as well as in monitoring and providing technical input to the development of international standards to safeguard Malaysia's interest. In addition, MTIB is also involved in standard development initiatives in the region. Within this scope, I understand that MTIB is working closely with other agencies such as FRIM, UiTM and the industry associations which have developed several standards related to structural application of timbers.

12. The organisation of this Seminar therefore augurs well as a platform for dissemination and exchanging information on the wider application and structural design of timber. Designing structural application of engineered timber products is no easy task. It requires engineering knowledge and good understanding of timber. Hence, I hope this seminar will help to stimulate interest of both the end users and the specifiers. I would also like to urge the relevant government agencies to work closely with the industry and take strategic steps and actions to address upcoming challenges.

13. With that note, I am confident that this Seminar will provide an interesting forum for all participants to be updated on some of the latest developments, challenges and opportunities in the domestic market.

14. Before I end my speech, I wish to take this opportunity once again to express my heartiest appreciation to MTIB as the organizers and other supporting organisations such as FRIM, PAM, UiTM, public and private sectors who have supported and contributed towards the promotion of timber for structural application.

15. I would also like to thank all the speakers for sharing their expertise in this Seminar and also to the companies who are taking part in the mini exhibition. Finally, I wish all the participants will have a fruitful Seminar and on this note, I have great pleasure in officially declaring this Seminar open.

Thank you.

Kementerian Perusahaan Perladangan dan Komoditi

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