

Metal connectors are used extensively in timber framed construction both internally within the building envelope as well as externally where they are exposed to the 'elements'. These metal connectors include items such as strapping/bracing, framing anchors, cyclone ties, joist hangers and truss plates. Just as it is with timber, it is equally important to ensure the durability of metal connectors is appropriate to the environment in which they are used. The majority of metal connectors used in construction would be expected to perform satisfactorily for the life of the building, which for normal buildings, is 50 years.

This Data Sheet provides recommendations to assist in achieving this expectation for metal connectors.

HOW TO USE THIS DATA SHEET

1. Determine Corrosion Zone
2. Determine Exposure Condition (Table 1)
3. By considering 1. and 2. above, determine Minimum Corrosion Protection (Table 2).

CORROSION ZONE DEFINITIONS

Sea Spray Zone - Less than 1km from surf coast or 100m from bayside areas.

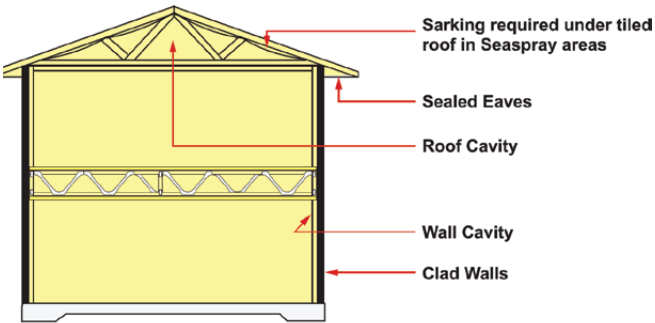
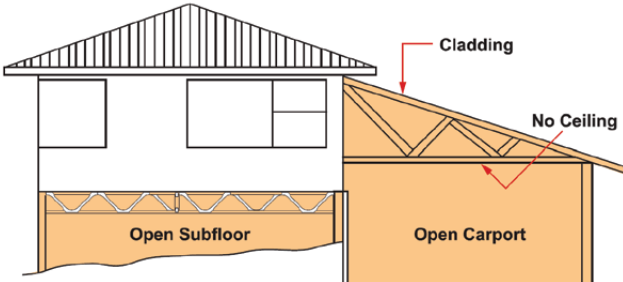
Coastal Zone - 1km to 10km from surf coast or 100m to 1km from bayside areas.

Industrial Zone - Close proximity to industrial complexes where corrosive gases may be emitted. eg. Port Pirie and Newcastle.

Special Hazard Zone - The environment within a building may also adversely affect the durability of connectors. For example enclosed swimming pools, fertiliser sheds, tanneries, chemical plants, piggeries, poultry sheds and similar may cause rapid corrosion of galvanised metal products and may also impact on stainless steel. Corrosion in these buildings will require special attention and is beyond the scope of this Data Sheet.

Low Hazard Zone - Generally locations not described by the above.

TABLE 1 - EXPOSURE CONDITION

Definition	Exposure Condition
<p>Enclosed Fully enclosed within the building envelope i.e. closed roof, floor and wall cavities.</p>	
<p>Sheltered Connectors not exposed to or washed by rain but may be subjected to wind-blown salts or other corrosive chemicals i.e. open garages, carports, shelters, open sub-floors and ventilated roof spaces.</p>	

Definition	Exposure Condition
<p>Exposed Connectors are exposed to weather and rain i.e. decks, pergolas and open sub-floor perimeters.</p>	

TABLE 2 – MINIMUM CORROSION PROTECTION

Corrosion Zone	Exposure Condition	Minimum Corrosion Protection
Seaspray Zone	Enclosed	Galvanised Z275 Class
	Sheltered	Stainless Steel 316 or equivalent
	Exposed	Stainless Steel 316 or equivalent
Coastal Zone	Enclosed	Galvanised Z275 Class
	Sheltered	Galvanised Z275 Class with 'Soft Seal' (or equivalent) Coating or Stainless Steel 316 or equivalent
	Exposed	Stainless Steel 316 or equivalent or 600+ gsm Hot Dipped Galvanising
Industrial Zone	Enclosed	Galvanised Z275 Class
	Sheltered	Galvanised Z275 Class with 'Soft Seal' (or equivalent) Coating or Stainless Steel 316 or equivalent
	Exposed	Stainless Steel 316 or equivalent or 600+ gsm Hot Dipped Galvanising
Special Hazard Zone	Enclosed	Special requirements depending on hazard. Refer to corrosion specialist.
	Sheltered	
	Exposed	
Low Hazard Zone	Enclosed	Galvanised Z275 Class
	Sheltered	Galvanised Z275 Class
	Exposed	Stainless Steel 316 or equivalent or 300+ gsm Hot Dipped Galvanising

Notes:

1. The majority of light gauge metal connectors are manufactured from Z275 galvanised steel.
2. The recommendations in Table 2 are only applicable to timber that has not been treated with timber preservatives that can cause accelerated corrosion. Refer additional advice that follows.
3. Toothed metal plate connectors (truss plates), should not be used in any exposed applications as cyclic wetting and drying (expansion/shrinkage) will cause the plates to disengage from the timber

TREATED TIMBER

Some timber preservatives such as CCA, ACQ and Copper Azole can cause accelerated corrosion of metal connectors, particularly where moisture is present as can occur in Exposed Conditions. For these situations, galvanised metal connectors will require additional

coatings such as epoxy paint or fusion coated to isolate the zinc in the galvanising from the copper in the timber treatment. Alternatively, stainless steel should be used.

LOSP timber preservatives have negligible effect on rates of corrosion and no special additional corrosion considerations are required for these.



Photograph 1 - ACCEPTABLE – Z275 bracing, multigrips and truss plates in a Low Hazard (>10km from surf) Sheltered Condition. Note: Connectors have been installed for 35 years.



Photograph 2 - NOT ACCEPTABLE – Z275 connectors in deck joists 1 km from surf. 6 years old, Sunshine Coast.



Photograph 3 - NOT ACCEPTABLE – Uncoated Z275 nail plates and framing anchors in Low Hazard Zone but Exposed Condition under a deck.

SAFE WORKING

Working with timber produces dust particles. Protection of the eyes, nose and mouth when sanding, sawing and planing is highly recommended. Refer to tool manufacturers for safe working recommendations for particular items of equipment.

DISPOSAL OF OFFCUTS AND WASTE

For any treated timber, do not burn offcuts or sawdust.

Preservative treated offcuts and sawdust should be disposed of by approved local authority methods.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Timber Service Life Design Guide #5 published by FWPA and available at www.woodsolutions.com.au

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Timber Queensland acknowledges the support of the following companies in the preparation of this Data Sheet:

MiTek Australia Ltd

Multinail Australia Pty Ltd

Pryda Australia / A Division of ITW Australia Pty Ltd



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