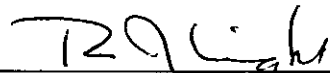


BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE
AIBC, APEGBC, BOABC, POABC

File No: 06-0019	INTERPRETATION	Page 1 of 1
Interpretation Date:	May 20, 2008	
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2006	
Subject:	Protection of openings exposing exterior stairs	
Keywords:	exposure protection, exterior stair	
Building Code Reference(s):	3.4.2.4., 3.2.3.13.	
Question:	<p>A warehouse (Group F, Division 2 major occupancy) is provided with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• exterior stairs to grade from the loading platform,• the stairs are located 3 m horizontally and less than 5 m vertically from the loading bay openings equipped with non-fire-protection rated overhead doors. <p>Do the unprotected openings (including, and in particular, do the loading bay openings equipped with non-fire-protection rated overhead doors) within 3 m horizontally of the exterior stairs require protection?</p>	
Interpretation:	<p>The requirement for exposure protection of exterior stairs is dependent on whether the stairs are required to be classified as an "exit" or as an "access to exit".</p> <p>Where the travel distance will comply with Article 3.4.2.4. measured from within the building to a point at least 3 m horizontally away from unprotected loading bay openings in the exterior wall of the building, the stair would be classified as an "access to exit" and the stair serves the same fire compartment. Therefore, there is no exposure to "exit" concern. It is interpreted that openings in the exterior wall are not considered to expose the exterior access to exit stair that serves the same fire compartment.</p> <p>However, where the travel distance will not comply with Article 3.4.2.4. measured from within the building to a point at least 3 m horizontally away from unprotected loading bay openings in the exterior wall of the building and the stair is a required exit from the floor area, the stair would be classified as an "exit". Therefore, there is an exposure to "exit" concern within openings within 3 m horizontally and 5 m vertically would require protection in conformance with Article 3.2.3.13.</p>	
 <hr/>		
R. J. Light, Committee Chair		
<small>The views expressed are the consensus of the joint committee of AIBC, APEGBC, BOABC, and POABC, which form the BC Building Code Interpretation Committee. The purpose of the committee is to encourage uniform province wide interpretation of the BC Building Code. These views should not be considered as the official interpretation of legislated requirements based on the BC Building Code, as final responsibility for an interpretation rests with the local Authority Having Jurisdiction. The views of the joint committee should not be construed as legal advice.</small>		