

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0102

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date:	September 16, 2025
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2024
Subject:	Canadian Wood Council – The Span Book
Keywords:	CWC, span, book
Building Code Reference(s):	Tables 9.23.4.2., A-9.23.4.2., Div A 1.5.1.3., Div B 1.3.1.1., Div B Table 1.3.1.2., Div C 2.2.7.1.,

Questions:

1. Is the CWC Span Book an acceptable alternative use to the Span Tables in Tables 9.23.4.2.-A to 9.23.12.3.-D of the BCBC?
2. If so, it acceptable to use the 2020 edition of the CWC Span Book rather than the 2009 edition as listed in Table 1.3.1.2. of Division B.
3. If so, is it acceptable to use it for configurations that are not listed in Tables 9.23.4.2.-A to 9.23.12.3.-D?

Interpretation:

1. Yes.

The Canadian Wood Council (CWC) generates for the CCBFC all span tables for wood structural components in the BCBC. Tables 9.23.4.2.-A to 9.23.12.3.-D cover only the most common configurations.

The Notes to Part 9 - A-9.23.4.2. explain the rationale for using the CWC Span Book:

Span Tables 9.23.4.2.-A to 9.23.12.3.-D cover only the most common configurations. Especially in the area of floors, a wide variety of other configurations is possible: glued subfloors, concrete toppings, machine stress rated lumber, etc. The Canadian Wood Council publishes "The Span Book" a compilation of span tables covering many of these alternative configurations. Although these tables have not been subject to the formal committee review process, the Canadian Wood Council generates, for the CCBFC, all of the Code's span tables for wood structural components; thus Code users can be confident that the alternative span tables in "The Span Book" are consistent with the span tables in the Code and with relevant Code requirements.



Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair

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2. No (but it may be the most appropriate edition to use).

Sentence 1.5.1.3.(1) of Division A states that the documents referenced in the BCBC are the editions designated in Subsection 1.3.1. of Division B.

Table 1.3.1.2. of Division B lists the 2009 version of the CWC Span Book as the applicable edition.

Sentence 1.3.1.1.(1) states that documents referenced in this Code shall include all amendments, revisions, reaffirmation, reapprovals, addenda and supplements effective to 15 July 2019.

Since the 2020 edition of the CWC Span Book was published after 15 July 2019, it is not the legally referenced document in Table 1.3.1.2. of Division B.

There are several previous editions of the Span Book dated 1990, 1995, 1999, 2004 and 2009. The 2009 edition is the legally referenced document in Table 1.3.1.2. of Division B.

The current edition of the Span Book is the 2020 edition, which includes several technical updates to correspond to the current CSA 086 – 2019.

Since CSA 086-2019 is the edition which is referenced in Table 1.3.1.2. of Division B for engineering design in wood, the 2020 edition of the CWC Span Book is the most appropriate edition to use for projects designed to CSA 086 – 2019 and the 2024 BCBC. Because the 2020 CWC Span Book was published after the publication of 2020 NBC, it was not referenced by 2020 NBC; hence it was not in 2024 BCBC.

Designers should discuss with the AHJ if they will accept the 2020 edition of the CWC Span Book since the 2009 edition may not be compatible with the current CSA 086 – 2019.

3. Yes (with conditions).

Subclause 2.2.7.1.(1)(c)(i) of Division C requires a registered professional with training and experience in structural design to undertake the design and field review of structural components in a Part 9 building that are outside of the scope of Part 9.



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Wood structural components that exceed the spans in Tables 9.23.4.2.-A to 9.23.12.3.-D would require a registered professional.

The Notes to Part 9 - A-9.23.4.2. explain the requirements for structural wood components which fall outside of the scope of the BCBC Tables.

Spans for wood joists, rafters and beams which fall outside the scope of these tables, including those for U.S. species and individual species not marketed in the commercial species combinations described in the span tables, can be calculated in conformance with CSA O86, "Engineering design in wood."

Tables 9.23.4.2.-A to 9.23.12.3.-D cover only the most common configurations, but CWC has used the same methodology in creating additional configurations.

Table A from the 2020 Span Book illustrates the additional configurations for Floor Joists spans:

Table A

Floor Joist Configuration Comparison

Floor Joist Configuration Comparison	CWC Span Book	NBC Span tables
Nailed subfloor	✓	✓
Nailed and glued subfloor	✓	
15mm thick subfloor	✓	✓
18mm thick subfloor	✓	
With strapping	✓	✓
With bridging	✓	✓
With strapping and bridging	✓	✓
With ceilings attached to wood furring	✓	✓
With concrete topping	✓	✓
Machine stress-rated (MSR) lumber	✓	

The 3 configurations without a checkmark under the NBC Span Tables can only be used if the design is provided by a registered professional.



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