



People's Republic of China

WOOD-FRAME HOUSING QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM



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March 2003



Canada Wood
Produits de bois canadien



CANADA WOOD EXPORT

CWE

加拿大木业协会



Forestry
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1.- Introduction

The introduction of the North American wood frame house construction system – platform frame construction (PFC) – into China is an important goal of the Canadian forest industry. The objective of this program is to develop a market for Canadian solid wood products. The Council of Forest Industries, together with other industry associations, has organized a comprehensive market development program in support of the introduction of this construction system. This program has benefited from funding provided by the Federal Government and the Government of the Province of British Columbia.

In early 2001 the general consensus between experts was that the Chinese building code system does not so much restrict wood construction as provide inadequate coverage. As a result of this conclusion it was agreed that Canadian specialists should develop an appropriate wood frame construction code for China. This work has been undertaken by Forintek Canada Corporation staff - in cooperation with others - and the proposal is currently under review by the Government of China.

A recently completed overview of the market opportunities for wood frame construction in China offers a positive outlook. The report indicates that there is a rising level of interest in this technology and mentions that numerous developers are considering this form of construction. A few have declared their interest in taking a lead role in the use of this technology.

There is currently a need to begin to address the importance of a quality assurance program that will regulate wood frame construction in China. It is an important ingredient of this market development effort and, if properly followed, will increase the probability of the safe and lasting use of this construction system.

The following pages contain an analysis of Canadian quality assurance programs, how these could be applied in China and how such a program could be delivered and enforced. It suggests the roles that government agencies could play as well as the role of developers and other involved parties. It outlines the role that Canadian organizations can play in the development of this program. The primary objective is the provision of an additional degree of protection for consumers through the assurance of minimum quality standards. This program is expected to facilitate the issuance of insurance policies and the granting of mortgages to the Chinese homebuyers. It could become a cornerstone ingredient linking wood-frame construction to North American techniques

and materials.

This report has been undertaken in support of COFI's market development program with financial assistance from the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia. Input from COFI staff, led by Paul Newman, Director Market Access and Trade, throughout the preparation of this report is acknowledged and appreciated.

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