



JCC urges hike in steel import quota into Thailand



The Japanese Chamber of Commerce (JCC) is urging the Thai government to raise its steel import quota as listed in the Japan-Thailand Economic Partnership Agreement (JTEPA), as the chamber claims the quota keeps falling as per reports.

Mr. Masaki Katsuta, chairman of JCC's metal division said, "The import quota was quite short of what we proposed

and we are wondering why, as there was no explanation." Mr. Katsuta said that he was concerned the Thai auto sector would be affected if the supply of hot-rolled steel fell short of demand, since the quota decreased this year.

He said, "We think it could reduce the competitiveness of Thai industries. We raised this concern with the Thai government, but there was no response." He added that the Office of Industrial Economics (OIE) told the JCC the lower quota was in line with falling demand, and that if demand rose sharply Thai steel importers could refund an import duty of around 5% later under Section 19 of the Customs Act. He further added, "We asked the OIE to review the Section 19 system or raise the quota, whichever is easier to increase Q9 imports."

The agreement calls for Thailand to

collaborate with Japan in setting its import quota for three types of hot-rolled steel — Q9, Q10 and Q11. The JCC suggested 1.5 million tonnes this year, but the Thai government issued a quota of only 530,000 tonnes. The duty-free import quota is for Japanese steel used in the car industry, as Thailand cannot produce these three steel types by itself.

Japan proposed an import quota of 367,700 tonnes and 443,000 tonnes for two types of hot-rolled steel in 2014, but Thailand issued a quota of only 354,700 tonnes and 375,000 tonnes for the two types. The biggest concern for the JCC was a sharp fall in the import quota of Q9 hot-rolled steel, which is widely used for automobiles and auto parts. This quota was set at 210,000 tonnes, far below the JCC proposal of 711,500 tonnes.

Metal roof systems can last 60 years- MCA

The Metal Construction Association (MCA) has released new research findings that conclude that certain metal roof systems can last at least 60 years, meaning they do not require replacement during a commercial building's service life.

Good news for the environment: new study verifies that steel roofs last longer than the buildings they cover, typically 60 years or more. Most non-metal roofing systems require one or more full replacements within a typical building's 60-year service life, which is costly and often adds to the solid waste stream in landfills.

Mr. Scott Kriner, Technical Director, Metal Construction Association, said "This study is a breakthrough for the metal construction industry because it finally provides third-party, scientific data that backs up the long held stance that 55% Al-Zn coated steel standing seam roofing systems are very durable, economic, and can be better for the environment."

The study, sponsored by MCA and the ZAC Association, was conducted with oversight of three independent consulting

firms which analyzed low-slope, unpainted 55% Al-Zn coated steel standing seam roofing, in a wide range of environments across the US.

This type of roof material is known by many trade names throughout the world, principally GALVALUME® and Zinalume® in the United States. It is very common on low rise commercial buildings such as warehouses, schools, distribution centers, shopping centers, exposition halls



and other facilities. Experts estimate that the market size for this type of low slope roofing in the US is over 350 million square feet.

The study incorporates the results of multiple field inspections, independent laboratory analyses of metallic corrosion of the roof panels, components and sealants, and includes assessment of all

integral ancillary components that impact the end of roof service life.

The research team selected 14 building sites in 5 climate regions of various geographies in the continental United States, exhibiting a spectrum of climates related to heat and humidity including Hot-Dry, Hot-Humid, Cold-Dry, Cold-Humid, and Moderate-Acid. The precipitation acidity also varies considerably from one site to the next over this broad geography.

The research study concluded that the expected service life of an unpainted 55% Al-Zn coated steel standing seam roof constructed today in a wide range of environments using best practices can be expected to be in excess of 60 years, a value that equals the assumed building service life as described in the USGBC's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design building rating program, version 4.

In the study, the steel panel roofs experienced corrosion rates that conservatively project service lives well beyond the service life of most buildings. The range depends on the climate and the local precipitation pH.