

Commercial EPCs – almost ‘rocket science’

UNLIKE the domestic Energy Performance Certificate (EPC), the commercial version is far from straight forward. Firstly, there are three levels of Accreditation for Assessors.

The first level, Level 3, enables the assessor to assess the simplest of commercial buildings such as small retail units, simple office buildings and warehouses with low output heating/cooling systems; Level 4 is for larger commercial buildings with some form of air conditioning or high output heating systems; and Level 5 is for complex commercial properties which require a different energy modelling tool to those in level 3 and 4.

It is the Assessors' responsibility to ensure that the building he/she is assessing is within their level of expertise.

The Regulations are complex with many grey areas. For instance, sub-divided buildings with parts separately occupied and their own heating/cooling may require multiple EPCs.

A detailed inspection is necessary to collect the data, which in some cases will be considerable. Each area of the building is broken down into zones in accordance with its design use such as a workshop area, canteen area, office area

*By Russell Francis
Director
Commsurv – the
Building Surveying &
Energy Assessment
Division of Homesurv Ltd*



and storage etc. Information is collected in respect of the construction, dimensions for doors, windows, walls, floors, roofs and rooflights, heating and its controls, ventilation and

its controls, air conditioning and its controls and lighting and its controls, for each zone.

The availability of detailed drawings, heating manuals etc will simplify the process to a

degree. Once the data is collected it is input in to a Simplified Building Energy Model (SBEM) for Level 3 and 4 buildings and Dynamic Simulation Model (DSM) for Level 5, and an energy rating of zero to 100 is produced. The higher the rating the poorer the efficiency.

The final certificate is accompanied by a 'Recommendations Report'. Finally, the EPC is lodged with Landmark the central secure database and allocated a RRN number which permits retrieval by interested parties.

For further information email cpc@homesurvuk.com or telephone 01604 882522.