



National Fenestration Rating Council Incorporated

NFRC SOFTWARE APPROVAL GUIDELINES

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PREPARED BY:

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FOREWORD

The following guidelines and criteria shall be used to evaluate new software or upgrades for use by NFRC Accredited Simulation and Test Laboratories to generate performance ratings in accordance with approved NFRC procedures. Before approval by the NFRC Technical Committee and the Board of Directors, the Software Review Subcommittee shall evaluate the proposed software using the following methodology.

Questions on the use of these guidelines should be addressed to:

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GUIDELINES

A task group consisting of a minimum of five NFRC members and one NFRC Staff member shall be formed to review and evaluate the software, accompanying User's Manual, validation results, and any commitments provided by the vendor or authors of the software. This Software Review Task Group shall identify how the software package meets each of the criteria numbered below, and shall provide a brief description of how well the software package satisfies that individual criteria. If a particular criterion is not applicable, it does not need to be evaluated, but the reasons for omitting that criterion shall be identified. Any serious disagreements between task group members concerning specific guidelines shall also be identified. The final task group evaluation shall be developed into a written report or presentation for discussion at the next Software Review Subcommittee Meeting.

- 1. Satisfying NFRC Criteria.** A proposed computer software tool shall be evaluated to determine if it meets the requirements of the applicable NFRC technical procedures. It is the software vendor's responsibility to demonstrate that the software meets those criteria.
- 2. Cost/Benefit.** The software vendor shall identify all current and future costs of the software, including any related training, installation and update costs. The task group shall work with NFRC Staff to generate a cost benefits analysis of implementing the software.

This analysis shall include the potential future costs to NFRC and its staff to maintain its rating and certification procedures in conjunction with other currently used software tools. In addition, this analysis shall include the potential cost to manufacturing participants, Inspection Agencies, and/or accredited laboratories to acquire and use the software. The vendor is expected to make modifications and updates as needed at a reasonable cost and within a reasonable period of time.

- 3. Accuracy.** The software vendor shall establish that the software tool is accurate by comparing the results, if possible, to available reference standards, test results and advanced computer modeling. Peer review of the software tool or published articles about the software tool may be necessary to meet these criteria.
- 4. Comparisons.** The software vendor shall generate results using the proposed software for a representative range of fenestration product types, and compare them to test and/or previously simulated results for those specimens.
- 5. Usability & Reliability.** The proposed software tool shall be made available to NFRC program participants and/or accredited laboratories for evaluation to demonstrate that the tool is useable and reliable. The Software Review Task

Group shall review all comments from any review or evaluation, and be briefed in any actions taken by the vendor in response to each comment.

- 6. Documentation.** The vendor shall provide adequate documentation, which illustrates the proper use and application of the proposed software to the NFRC rating process. This documentation shall include language that can be incorporated into the NFRC Simulation Manual or any other applicable documents. Any proposed modifications to NFRC documents shall not be distributed without mutual consent of the vendor and NFRC.
- 7. Training and Technical Support.** The software vendor shall provide all necessary training and technical support for the use of the software by NFRC Accredited Laboratories and program participants.
- 8. Availability.** The proposed software shall be made available to all NFRC Accredited Laboratories and program participants at equal costs, and without restrictions or limitations.
- 9. Upgrade or Withdrawal of Existing Software.** In the event that existing software is to be upgraded or withdrawn, the Software Review Task Group shall provide a recommendation as to when the existing software shall no longer be used.

Ownership of Software and Contract Documentation. Before final approval, contract documentation for the procurement of this software will be reviewed by NFRC legal counsel and the Board of Directors to address ownership issues as well as procedures for NFRC to confirm performance of the software with the appropriate warranty language.