



BRANZ Appraised

Appraisal No.472 [2011]

BRANZ Appraisals

Technical Assessments of products
for building and construction

**BRANZ
APPRAISAL
No. 472 (2011)**

**SUPERFLEX™ WET
AREA MEMBRANES**

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Product

1.1 Superflex™ Wet Area Membranes are premixed and two-part, liquid applied waterproofing membranes for use under ceramic or stone finishes in internal wet areas.



Scope

2.1 Superflex™ Wet Area Membranes have been appraised for use as waterproofing membranes for internal wet areas of buildings, within the following scope:

- on floor substrates of concrete, flooring grade particleboard, plywood, and fibre cement sheet tile underlay, and on wall substrates of wet area fibre cement sheet lining systems and wet area plasterboard lining systems; and,
- when protected from physical damage by ceramic or stone tile finishes; and,
- where floors are designed and constructed such that deflections do not exceed 1/360th of the span.

2.2 The use of Superflex™ Wet Area Membranes on concrete slabs where hydrostatic or vapour pressure is present is outside the scope of this Appraisal.

2.3 Building structural movement and control joints in the substrate must be carried through to the tile finish. The design and construction of the substrate and movement and control joints are specific to each building, and therefore the responsibility of the building designer and building contractor and are outside the scope of this Appraisal.

2.4 Ceramic or stone tile finishes are outside the scope of this Appraisal.

2.5 The membranes must be installed by Ardex New Zealand Ltd trained and approved applicators.

Building Regulations

New Zealand Building Code (NZBC)

3.1 in the opinion of BRANZ, Superflex™ Wet Area Membranes if designed, used, installed and maintained in accordance with the statements and conditions of this Appraisal, will meet the following provisions of the NZBC:

Clause B2 DURABILITY: Performance B2.3.1 (b) 15 years. Superflex™ Wet Area Membranes meet this requirement. See Paragraph 9.1.

Clause E3 INTERNAL MOISTURE: Performance E3.3.6. Interior wet area floors and walls incorporating Superflex™ Wet Area Membranes will meet this requirement. See Paragraphs 11.1- 11.6.

Clause F2 HAZARDOUS BUILDING MATERIALS: Performance F2.3.1. Superflex™ Wet Area Membranes meet this requirement and will not present a health hazard to people.

This is an Appraisal of an **Alternative Solution** in terms of New Zealand Building Code compliance.

Technical Specification

4.1 Materials supplied by Ardex New Zealand Ltd are as follows:

Superflex™ WPM001 Premixed Bathroom and Balcony

- A one part, polymer-based, ready-to-use, liquid-applied membrane containing micro-fibres, supplied as a light blue thixotropic paste in 6.5 kg (approximately 5 litres) and 20 kg (approximately 15 litres) pails.

Superflex™ WPM002 Two Part Bathroom and Balcony

- A fast drying, two part, flexible, cementitious-based, liquid applied membrane containing micro-fibres. It is supplied as Superflex™ WPM002 Part A Liquid in 10 and 20 kg pails and Superflex™ WPM002 Part B Powder in 10 kg multi-wall bags. When dry, the membrane is light grey in colour.

Superflex™ Primer

- A water-based primer used to seal substrates and enhance the adhesion of the membranes. It is supplied as a red coloured liquid in 20 kg plastic containers.

Handling and Storage

5.1 All materials must be stored inside, up off concrete floors, in dry conditions, out of direct sunlight and out of freezing conditions. The membrane products have a shelf life of 12 months from date of manufacture in the original unopened packaging. Once opened, the products must be used within 3 months.

Technical Literature

6.1 Refer to the Appraisals listing on the BRANZ website for details of the current Technical Literature for the Superflex™ Wet Area Membranes. The Technical Literature must be read in conjunction with this Appraisal. All aspects of design, use, installation and maintenance contained in the Technical Literature and within the scope of this Appraisal must be followed.

Design Information

General

7.1 Superflex™ Wet Area Membranes are for use in buildings where an impervious waterproof membrane is required to floors and walls to prevent damage to building elements and adjoining areas.

7.2 Superflex™ WPM002 Two Part is designed to be used where a quicker curing time is required, such as in cool or humid conditions.

7.3 The membranes must be protected from physical damage by the application of ceramic or stone tile finishes.

7.4 Movement and control joints may be required depending on the shape and size of the building or room, and the tile finish specified. Design guidelines can be found in the BRANZ "Good Practice Guide Tiling".

7.5 Timber framing systems must comply with NZS 3604, or where specific engineering design is used, the framing shall be of at least equivalent stiffness to the framing provisions of NZS 3604, or comply with the serviceability criteria of AS/NZS 1170. In all cases framing must be provided so that the maximum span of the substrate as specified by the substrate manufacturer is met and all sheet edges are fully supported. Timber framing systems supporting the substrates must be

constructed such that deflections do not exceed 1/360th of the span. Where NZS 3604 is used, the allowable joist spans given in Table 7.1 shall be reduced by 20%.

Substrates

Plywood

8.1 Plywood must be a minimum of 17mm thick complying with AS/NZS 2269, CD Grade Structural with sanded C face upwards and treated to H3 (CCA treated). LOSP treated plywood must not be used. The plywood must be supported with dwangs or framing with a maximum span of 400mm in each direction, fixed with 10g x 50mm stainless steel countersunk head screws at 150mm centres on the edges and 200mm through the body of the sheets.

Fibre Cement Compressed Sheet/Fibre Cement Sheet Tile Underlay

8.2 Fibre cement compressed sheet must be manufactured to comply with the requirements of AS 2908.2 and must be specified by the manufacturer as being suitable for use as a wet area substrate. Fibre cement sheet tile underlay must be covered by a valid BRANZ Appraisal for use in internal wet areas. Installation must be in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

Particleboard

8.3 Particleboard must be specified for the end use in accordance with NZS 3602.

Concrete and Concrete Masonry

8.4 Concrete and concrete masonry substrates must be to a specific engineering design meeting the requirements of the NZBC, such as concrete construction to NZS 3101 and NZS 3604 Concrete Slab-On-Ground Floors and Concrete masonry to NZS 4229 and NZS 4230.

Wet Area Wall Linings

8.5 Plasterboard wall linings must be manufactured to comply with AS/NZS 2588, and be covered by a valid BRANZ Appraisal for use in internal wet areas.

8.6 Fibre Cement Sheet must be covered by a valid BRANZ Appraisal for use in wet areas.

Durability

Serviceable Life

9.1 Superflex™ Wet Area Membranes, when subjected to normal conditions of environment and use, are expected to have a serviceable life of at least 15 years and be compatible with ceramic or stone tile finishes with a design service life of 15-25 years.

Maintenance

10.1 No maintenance of the membranes will be required provided significant substrate movement does not occur and the tile finish remains intact. Regular checks must be made of the tiled areas to ensure they are sound and will not allow moisture to penetrate. Any cracks or damage must be repaired immediately by repairing the tiles, grouts and sealants.

10.2 In the event of damage to the membranes, the tiling must be removed and the membrane repaired by removing the damaged portion and applying as for new work.

10.3 Drainage outlets must be maintained to operate effectively, and ceramic or stone tile finishes must be kept clean.

Internal Moisture

11.1 Superflex™ Wet Area Membranes are impervious to water and when appropriately designed and installed will avoid the likelihood of water penetrating behind linings or entering concealed spaces.

11.2 Superflex™ Wet Area Membranes are suitable for use to contain accidental overflow to meet NZBC Clause E3.3.2. A means of Code Compliance for overflow is given in NZBC Acceptable Solution E3/AS1 Paragraph 2.

11.3 Surfaces must be finished with ceramic or stone tile finishes. A means of Code Compliance to NZBC Clause E3.3.3 and E3.3.4 is given in NZBC Acceptable Solution E3/AS1 Paragraph 3.1.1 (b), 3.1.2 (b) and 3.3.1 (b).

11.4 Falls in showers and shower areas must be a minimum of 1 in 50. In unenclosed showers, falls must extend a minimum of 1500 mm out from the shower rose. Floor wastes must be provided and the floor must fall to the outlet.

11.5 The waterproofing membrane must completely cover shower bases, and for unenclosed showers it must extend a minimum of 1500 mm out from the shower rose. Further design guidance on waterproofing wet areas, including waterproofing walls and junctions can be obtained from AS 3740, BRANZ "Good Practice Guide Tiling", and flooring and wallboard manufacturers.

11.6 Where water resistant wall finishes such as prefinished sheet materials are used, they must flash over the membrane a minimum of 30mm.

Installation Information

Installation Skill Level Requirement

12.1 Installation of the membranes must be completed by Ardex New Zealand Ltd trained and approved applicators.

12.2 Installation of substrates must be completed by tradespersons with an understanding of internal wet area construction, in accordance with instructions given within the Ardex New Zealand Ltd Technical Literature and this Appraisal.

Preparation of Substrates

13.1 Substrates must be dry, clean and stable before installation commences. With surfaces that are even and free from nibs, sharp edges, dust, dirt or other materials such as oil, grease or concrete formwork release agents.

13.2 The relative humidity of the concrete must be 75% or less before membrane application. Concrete substrates can be checked for dryness by using a hygrometer as set out in BRANZ Bulletin No. 424.

13.3 All voids, cracks, holes, joints and excessively rough areas must be filled to achieve an even and uniform surface. Junctions of substrate abutments, such as at wall/floor and wall/wall junctions must have fiberglass mesh installed as set out in the Technical Literature.

Membrane Installation

14.1 Installation must not be undertaken where the substrate surface temperature is below 10°C or above 35°C.

14.2 Superflex™ WPM002 Two Part Bathroom and Balcony liquid and dry components must be mixed and left to stand for 5 minutes before re-mixing, then applying. Superflex™ WPM001 Premixed Bathroom and Balcony must be thoroughly stirred before application.

14.3 The membranes must be applied in a minimum of two coats at the rates set out in the Technical Literature to give a total finished thickness of 1.2 – 1.5 mm. Subsequent coats must be applied at an opposite direction to the previous coat.

14.4 Application can be made by roller (medium/long nap), brush (long bristle), or a flat steel trowel.

14.5 Reinforcement fabric is bedded into the wet layer between coats to provide movement protection at wall/wall and wall/floor junctions, and at any other areas such as joints in the flooring substrate, floor cracks or around penetrations in the membrane.

14.6 Clean up may be undertaken with water.

Tiling

15.1 The membranes must be fully cured before tiling. The cured membranes must be protected at all times to prevent mechanical damage, so may require temporary covers until the finishing is completed.

15.2 Tiling must be undertaken in accordance with AS 3958.1 and the BRANZ "Good Practice Guide, Tiling". The compatibility of tile adhesive must be confirmed with the adhesive manufacturer or Ardex New Zealand Ltd.

Inspections

16.1 Critical areas of inspection are:

- Construction of substrates, including crack control and installation of bond breakers and movement control joints.
- Moisture content of the substrate prior to the application of the membrane.
- Acceptance of the substrate by the membrane installer prior to application of the membrane.
- Installation of the membrane to the manufacturer's instructions, particularly installation to the correct thickness and use of reinforcement.
- Membrane curing and integrity prior to the installation of tiles including protection from mechanical damage during curing and prior to tile installation.

Health and Safety

17.1 Safe use and handling procedures for the membranes are provided in the Technical Literature. The materials must be used in conjunction with the relevant Material Safety Data Sheet.

Basis of Appraisal

The following is a summary of the technical investigations carried out:

Tests

18.1 The following testing of Superflex™ WPM001 Premixed Bathroom and Balcony and Superflex™ Two Part Bathroom and Balcony has been undertaken by Ardex Australia Pty Ltd research and development laboratory: water vapour transmission; water absorption; tensile strength and elongation before and after UV exposure, immersion in bleach, immersion in industrial detergent and immersion in water. Test methods and results were reviewed by BRANZ and found to be satisfactory.

18.2 The following testing of Superflex™ WPM001 Premixed Bathroom and Balcony was undertaken by the Commonwealth Scientific Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) Australia:

- In accordance with ANSI A118.10 for ICBO Evaluation Service - dimensional stability; waterproofness; shear strength to ceramic tile and cement mortar; and fungal and micro-organism resistance.
- In accordance with AS 1145 – behaviour under cyclic strain.

18.3 Testing of Superflex™ WPM001 Premixed Bathroom and Balcony and Superflex™ WPM002 Two Part Bathroom and Balcony has been undertaken by BRANZ for low temperature flexibility and peel adhesion after heat/humidity aging.

18.4 Testing for suitability over particleboard in accordance with AS/NZS 4858-2004, Appendix C has not been undertaken because compliance with the standard has been met by satisfactory water vapour transmission test results.

The above test methods and results have been reviewed by BRANZ and found to be satisfactory.

Other Investigations

19.1 An assessment was made of the durability of the Superflex™ Wet Area Membranes by BRANZ technical experts.

19.2 Site visits have been carried out by BRANZ to assess the practicability of installation and to examine completed installations.

19.3 The Technical Literature has been examined by BRANZ and found to be satisfactory.

Quality

20.1 The manufacture of the membrane has been examined by BRANZ, and details regarding the quality and composition of the materials used were obtained by BRANZ and found to be satisfactory.

20.2 The quality management system of membrane's manufacturer has been assessed and found to be satisfactory.

20.3 The quality of supply of the membrane system materials to the market is the responsibility of Ardex New Zealand Ltd.

20.4 Quality on site is the responsibility of the Ardex New Zealand Ltd approved and trained applicators.

20.5 Designers are responsible for the substrate design, and building contractors are responsible for the quality of construction of substrate systems in accordance with the instructions of the substrate manufacturer, Ardex New Zealand Ltd and this Appraisal.

20.6 Building owners are responsible for the maintenance of the tiling or stone finishing systems in accordance with the instructions of Ardex New Zealand Ltd.

Sources of Information

- AS 2908.2: 2000 Cellulose-cement products - flat sheet.
- AS 3740 – 2010 Waterproofing of wet areas within residential buildings.
- AS 3958.1: 1991 Guide to the installation of ceramic tiles.
- AS/NZS 1170: 2002 Structural design actions.
- AS/NZS 2269: 2008 Plywood - Structural.
- AS/NZS 4858 - 2004 Wet area membranes.
- NZS 3101: 1995 The design of concrete structures.
- NZS 3602: 2003 Timber and wood-based products for use in buildings.
- NZS 3604: 1999 Timber framed buildings.
- NZS 3604: 2011 Timber-framed buildings.
- NZS 4229: 1999 Concrete masonry buildings not requiring specific engineering design.
- NZS 4230: 1990 Code of practice for the design of masonry structures.
- New Zealand Building Code Handbook Department of Building and Housing, Third Edition May 2007.
- The Building Regulations 1992, up to, and including August 2008 Amendment.
- Good Practice Guide Tiling, BRANZ, March 2004.
- Good Practice Guide Membrane Roofing, BRANZ, October 2003.



BRANZ

In the opinion of BRANZ, Superflex™ Wet Area Membranes are fit for purpose and will comply with the Building Code to the extent specified in this Appraisal provided they are used, designed, installed and maintained as set out in this Appraisal.

The Appraisal is issued only to Ardex New Zealand Ltd, and is valid until further notice, subject to the Conditions of Appraisal.

Conditions of Appraisal

1. This Appraisal:
 - a) relates only to the product as described herein;
 - b) must be read, considered and used in full together with the technical literature;
 - c) does not address any Legislation, Regulations, Codes or Standards, not specifically named herein;
 - d) is copyright of BRANZ.
2. **Ardex New Zealand:**
 - a) continues to have the product reviewed by BRANZ;
 - b) shall notify BRANZ of any changes in product specification or quality assurance measures prior to the product being marketed;
 - c) abides by the BRANZ Appraisals Services Terms and Conditions.
 - d) Warrants that the product and the manufacturing process for the product are maintained at or above the standards, levels and quality assessed and found satisfactory by BRANZ pursuant to BRANZ's Appraisal of the product.
3. BRANZ makes no representation or warranty as to:
 - a) the nature of individual examples of, batches of, or individual installations of the product, including methods and workmanship;
 - b) the presence or absence of any patent or similar rights subsisting in the product or any other product;
 - c) any guarantee or warranty offered by **Ardex New Zealand**.
4. Any reference in this Appraisal to any other publication shall be read as a reference to the version of the publication specified in this Appraisal.
5. BRANZ provides no certification, guarantee, indemnity or warranty, to **Ardex New Zealand** or any third party.

For BRANZ

P Burghout
Chief Executive

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