



**B R I T I S H  
A S S O C I A T I O N  
O F  
R E I N F O R C E M E N T**

7<sup>th</sup> December 2017

### **BAR GUIDANCE NOTE 1/17: CONTINUITY STRIPS**

There is a worrying increase in the importation of non-CARES approved reinforcement continuity strips. A reinforcement continuity strip is designed to maintain continuity across construction joints in concrete structures. It consists of reinforcement that is pre-bent and housed in a purpose-design carrier casing. Failure of continuity strip systems can compromise the structural integrity of the connection whilst breakage of the product during installation can result in injury to the fixer.

Continuity strips are one of the many reinforcement construction accessories that are not covered by national or international standards. This underlines the importance of compliance with the CARES Technical Approvals scheme. This provides product certification for continuity strips thereby offering assurance of that the product is fit-for-purpose.

It should be noted that the National Structural Concrete Specification (NSCS) recognises the structural importance of continuity strips and advocates use of products with a valid CARES Technical Approval certificate. The robust certification process includes testing at independent laboratories, a double re-bend test to verify the rebar element's ductility and its ability to withstand the forces involved in bending. Independent product testing is carried out at least twice a year. CARES also carries out in-situ structural testing to evaluate the performance of construction joints under loading.

It has been reported that non-approved continuity strip systems may make spurious claims regarding certification, stating that the rebar is CARES approved so that should suffice. This is not the case. A continuity strip containing CARES-approved rebar is not the same as a continuity strip with CARES Technical Approval.

There are currently four CARES technically approved continuity strips on the market:

1. Startabox (RFA-Tech)
2. Eazistrip (Ancon)

3. Ferbox (Invisible Connections)
4. Kwikastrip (Halfen)

These have the product assurance that non-approved systems do not. Specifiers are advised to ensure that their continuity strip has full CARES Technical Approval.

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