News Release

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Speakers at FGIA Virtual Summer Summit Discuss Evolution of Security Screens, VIG

SCHAUMBURG, IL – The Fenestration and Glazing Industry Alliance (FGIA) hosted two sessions that reviewed the evolution of two different product types: security screens and vacuum insulated glass (VIG). A panel discussion on the former shared the latest about security screens, including the release of a new FGIA document on the topic. A second panel about VIG discussed some of the challenges of the technology, but also the many positive outcomes it can provide, particularly with energy savings.

**Security Screens | Understanding the New North American Specification and Opportunities for the Industry**

A new FGIA document, AAMA 1901, *Specification for Security Screen Products*, was recently released thanks to the work of the FGIA Security Screens Task Group. This developing group utilized existing Australian standards and adapted them for the U.S. Panelists at the Summit discussed the document and included: Michael Leigh ([Crimsafe North America](https://crimsafe.com/)), who explained how security screen standards evolved in Australia; Dan Parrish ([UHD Innovations](https://uniquehd.com/)), who covered testing; and Jeff Bell (UHD Innovations), who gave an overview of potential market opportunities. The panel was moderated by Ray Garries (Global Fenestration Advisors).

***Australia Leading the Way***

Leigh shared a brief history of security screen standards in Australia, the first of which came out in 1985. In the 1990s, standards were expanded to include performance, installation and methods of test. Just a couple of years ago, all standards on the topic were combined into one, which then served as the basis for the new AAMA 1901 in the U.S.

The security screen market in Australia is large, said Leigh, as they serve a dual function: keeping pests and intruders out of the home while ventilating a space. “Due to their growing popularity, the industry organized an association to aid in standards, safety and reliability,” said Leigh. The Australian standard helped consumers distinguish between compliant and non-compliant products, he said. “Standards have really driven growth, accountability and innovation.”

***Security Screen Testing***

Parrish then shared details about the development of AAMA 1901, as well as the testing included in the document. “It takes years to get a specification to the finish line,” he said. “We really appreciate the collaborative effort and the work to make this a great specification.” Parrish shared that its intent was to focus on what happens when someone tries to break into a house. “Opportunistic force entry is also included in [the North American Fenestration Standard], so many of you may already be aware,” he said. Minimum test sizes are part of the standard, much like with NAFS.

Testing of security screens must be done in a particular order. Impact, pry and pull tests are performed sequentially on the same specimen, which may be done in-house, while shear and knife shear tests are component tests performed at AAMA Accredited Labs. Component test reports are valid for five years.

***Market Potential***

Lastly, Bell provided insight into the current market for security screens. “The residential security market is projected at $78 billion in 2025,” said Bell. “It is a high growth segment with an 8 percent compound annual growth rate.” Ducker Carlisle projected a $2-3 billion annual market potential, including both the residential and commercial spaces, particularly on the east and west coasts, Bell said. “This is a big untapped opportunity with low consumer awareness. The performance standard, followed by a certification program, will put wind in the sails of this category.”

An emerging opportunity is the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) market, noted Bell. In Australia, window manufacturers started offering upgrades to their existing products as consumer awareness increased. Two other marketable aspects of security screens are fall prevention and fire resistance. While the U.S. doesn’t have any codes for fire screen use with windows and doors, Australia and Canada do. “We anticipate that this is going to change and there will be adoption in the next 18-24 months that will work its way into building codes eventually,” said Bell.

[AAMA 1901](https://store.fgiaonline.org/aama-1901-25) is now available for purchase in the FGIA Online Store.

**Vacuum Insulated Glass | Integrating VIG into Energy Efficient Building Strategies**

Panelists for this topic included: Dave Cooper ([VacuumGlass](http://www.vacuumglassllc.com)), John Matuszewski ([Guardian Glass](http://www.guardian.com)) and Kayla Natividad ([Pilkington](http://www.pilkington.com)) with Rob Grommesh ([Cardinal](http://www.cardinalcorp.com)) serving as moderator. To start the session, Grommesh provided an overview of the history of vacuum insulating glass, noting that the first prototype was made in 1986.

***Tariff Impacts***

Cooper shared how U.S. tariffs on China have impacted North America’s access to VIG. “Historically, almost all VIG has been made outside of North America, with 86 percent produced in China,” said Cooper. “Recent administration actions have greatly affected the import cost. Things have really been bouncing around lately as we all know, and VIG has been affected by tariff implications.”

Cooper noted that tariffs have affected how VIG is produced and transported, as well as the cost of the final product. “For instance, [tariffs for] Chinese products are now at 59 percent, having just dropped from 145 percent and before that 245 percent,” he noted. “Last year, and for many years, they were steady at 30 percent.” Cooper added that there is not currently manufacturing capability for VIG in the U.S.

***Uses and Costs***

Natividad laid out many common applications of VIG, the most frequent of which is in historic preservation. “When people think VIG, they see dollar signs, but it’s project by project,” she said. “The IGU [insulating glass unit] cost alone might be two dollar signs, whereas VIG is more like three or four dollar signs by comparison. But once you take other aspects of your project into consideration, such as the embodied carbon used in construction and the energy savings, you might consider going with VIG after all.”

Natividad pointed out that reglazing with VIG can allow one to maintain operability of all the windows as well as preserve a building’s existing frames. “Even if you reglaze with a new IGU framing system you will see energy savings,” she said.

***Considerations and Testing***

Matuszewski suggested considering VIG for new construction now and in the future. “VIG retrofits are great, but we also need to consider it for new construction,” he said. “Think about things like how it is held in place, how deep it is and how it will impact the wall.”

Matuszewski added that while there has been a lot of work done in terms of VIG testing, there are still a lot of things that need to come into play, like the edges, not just the thermal center. “We need to know more about the details of things like static loading, different sizes of units and more,” he said. “ISO and ASTM standards continue to be developed.”

***Get Involved***

Grommesh recommended that interested FGIA members get involved with any or all of FGIA’s three VIG-related task groups: the [SKY-Aspects of Vacuum Insulating Glass (VIG) in Skylights Task Group](https://fgiaonline.org/committees/203); the [Vacuum Insulating Glass (VIG) (IGMA TB-2600) Task Group](https://fgiaonline.org/committees/100); and the [Vacuum Insulating Glass (VIG) Load Resistance Testing Task Group](https://fgiaonline.org/committees/187).

For more coverage about the FGIA Virtual Summer Summit, visit [FGIAonline.org/news](https://fgiaonline.org/news).

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