

Micom **iMPACT** (issue #4, November, 2001)

**New ANSI/BIFMA X5.6 Standard
For Panel Systems**

As you may know, BIFMA has been reviewing its panel standard for the past 2 years. The work of the committee is one meeting away from being completed and the standard will then be sent to the BIFMA membership canvass process. Globally the new standard is significantly different from its previous version. Format wise, the sections were rearranged by feature instead of by component type. It is also much more consistent with ANSI/BIFMA X5.5-98. A fair amount of new cyclical tests were added to various components, tops, doors, drawers and others. The loading methods also changed for the tops, now perimeters are used instead of width and are now identical to BIFMA X 5.5-98.

This new standard will make it easier for manufacturers having product lines that amalgamate freestanding products with their panel systems and/or their desking system or for manufacturers that offer a continuum between their freestanding product lines, their desking systems and their panel systems.

For manufacturers on the CGSB program, the new standard will limit the extent of additional tests required in order to qualify to GPD-4 until the new CGSB 44.229 finally gets published.

Please find below a test-by-test comparison between the draft and the current standard.

We trust you will find this information of interest to you. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call us.

Best Regards

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Test by test comparison:

ANSI/BIFMA X 5.6 200X draft standard section #:	BIFMA 5.6 current standard section #:	Major difference(s)
3.2 Tolerances	N.A.	New addition to the standard. This add on is consistent with the new generation of BIFMA Standards and tightens the standard.
3.6 Loading Guidelines	N.A.	New addition to the standard. This add-on is consistent with the new generation of BIFMA Standards and tightens the standard.
3.7	N.A.	1-inch clearance between height adjustable top & vertical & horizontal surface no test required, design feature.
3.8 Recommended Test Report format	N.A.	New addition to the standard. Consistent with the requirements of ISO 17025
4.0 Panel Flammability Test	N.A.	New addition. The need for doing this test was there before (GPD-4, National Building code). The tunnel test (ASTM E-84) is still called up. The BIFMA requirements are easier to meet than those from GPD-4.
5.1 Force Stability Test	4.2.2 Force stability	The longest panel run allowable also has to be tested
5.2 Impact Stability	4.2.3 Impact stability	The longest panel run allowable also has to be tested under certain conditions. If stack on panels are available, they must be included in the test
5.3 Force Stability Test for Screens	N.A.	The standard has incorporated a stability test for non-load carrying space dividers. Same test as 5.1. This however implicitly prevents this type of screen from being tested to test 5.2 - Impact stability which might be difficult for that type of partition.

ANSI/BIFMA X 5.6 200X draft standard section #:	BIFMA 5.6 current standard section #:	Major difference(s)
6. Mechanical Strength Test	5. Mechanical Strength Test	The panel and component specifications changed significantly; The shelves and tops are now tested simultaneously and the load rating is established as a function of the top perimeter instead of its length. The load rating remains the same for the shelves. The top is loaded around its perimeter instead of only on the front, which makes it more consistent with ANSI/BIFMA X 5.5 and easier for products to pass the test.
7. Panel Glide Assembly Strength test	N.A.	New test; 60 lbf force applied at the end of the glide when it is screwed half way in the panel
8.1 to 8.4. Panel Component Static Load Test – Work surfaces	6. Static Load test for storage shelves. 7. Static load test for display shelves. 11. Static load test for work surfaces & 12.2 Work surfaces with supported drawers; Static load tests	Combines section 11 & 12 of the previous standard into one. Functional load calculated and loaded on perimeter instead of top length. For a 36 X 72 top, the total load is the same except that it is around the perimeter instead of being at the front of the top. The test is more realistic this way and also easier to pass. With the addition of a Proof load concentrated test; this might be slightly more difficult to pass. Consistent with BIFMA X5.5-98.
8.5 Transaction Surfaces Torsional Load test	N.A.	New test. Same as in BIFMA X5.5
8.6 – 8.7 Load tests for Panel Mounted Storage Units - Static	8.2 Cabinet tests: Static loading	The top loading is now done as in the cabinet (3 lb/ linear inch instead of 2 for functional and 4.5 lb/ linear inch for proof). The proof load inside the cabinet went from 5 to 4.5 lb/linear inch which is in line with BIFMA X5.5

ANSI/BIFMA X 5.6 200X draft standard section #:	BIFMA 5.6 current standard section #:	Major difference(s)
9.1 Lock test; extendible member locks	8.5 Lock test for cabinets or storage bins 9.6 Lock test for lateral files 12.3 ; Lock test for drawers supported by work surfaces	Same horizontal force as before (50 lbf), addition of a 50 lbf upward 30 ^o pull (consistent with BIFMA X5.5-98). For test 12.3, the work surface does not need to be loaded anymore which allows using a lock system tested under X5.5 without having to retest it to X5.6. Test 9.2 of the new standard may be required instead of 9.1 depending of the door-cabinet type
9.2 Force Test for Door locks	8.5 Lock test for cabinets or storage bins 9.6 Lock test for lateral files	Same horizontal force as before (50 lbf), addition of a 50 lbf upward 30 ^o pull (consistent with BIFMA X5.5-98). Test 9.1 of the new standard may be required instead of 9.2 depending on the door-cabinet type.
10.1 Work surface durability	N.A.	New test for panel systems. This test has been in BIFMA X 5.5 for at least the past 3 editions.
10.2 Wear & fatigue test for Hinged doors	N.A.	New test for panel systems. This test is in the current BIFMA X 5.5 standard.
10.3 Drop test for horizontally hinged doors - cyclic	8.3 Drop test for receding doors for cabinets or storage bins 9.8 Drop test for receding doors of lateral files 10.4 Drop test for receding doors for file bins	This test has changed significantly; it went from a 60 ^o angle drop test, 10,000 cycles to a 90 ^o drop test, 500 cycles.
10.4 Wear and fatigue test for horizontal receding door	8.4 Cycle test for receding doors for cabinets or storage bins 9.9 Cycle test for receding doors of lateral files	Same test & number of cycles as before. The maximum cycling rate was increased from 12 to 16 cycles per minute. This is not a major difference.

ANSI/BIFMA X 5.6 200X draft standard section #:	BIFMA 5.6 current standard section #:	Major difference(s)
10.5 Wear and fatigue test for vertical receding door	N.A.	New test. This type of door is not covered by the current standard. Consistent with BIFMA X 5.5.
10.6 Sliding and roll front door wear and fatigue test	N.A.	New test. This type of door is not covered by the current standard. Consistent with BIFMA X 5.5.
10.7 Slam test for sliding and roll front doors which free fall open or closed	N.A.	New test. This type of door is not covered by the current standard. Consistent with BIFMA X 5.5.
10.8 Slam open and closed test for sliding and roll front doors which do not free fall	N.A.	New test. This type of door is not covered by the current standard. Consistent with BIFMA X 5.5.
10.9 Slam open test for all vertically hinged doors	N.A.	New test. This type of door is not covered by the current standard. Consistent with BIFMA X 5.5.
10.10 Door latch test	N.A.	New test. This type of door is not covered by the current standard. Consistent with BIFMA X 5.5.
10.11 Cycle test for extendible members deeper than wide	12.6 Cycle test for drawers supported by work surfaces	Same test with the exception that the top is not loaded in the incoming standard, which makes it consistent with BIFM X 5.5 - 1998.
10.12 Cycle test for extendible members wider than deep	8.7 Cycle test for lateral file drawers or roll-out shelves	Same test as before with the exception that the number of cycles went from 75 000 cycles to 50 000 cycles which is consistent with the current X 5.5 standard
10.13 Cycle test for centre/pencil drawers	N.A.	New test. Consistent with BIFMA X5.5.

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10.14 Out stop test	9.5 Out stop cycle test for lateral file drawers or rollout shelves. 12.4 Out stop test for drawers supported by work surfaces	Same as before for 9.5 (lateral files). New test for drawers; there was no cycle test before.
10.15 Rebound test	9.4 Rebound test for lateral file drawers or roll-out shelves 12.5 Rebound test for drawers supported by work surfaces	Same as before for 9.4 (lateral files). For test 12.5, the closing force is a function of the drawer load in the proposed standard whereas it is a function of the drawer height in the current standard.
10.16 Locking mechanism cycle test for all locks	N.A.	New test. Consistent with BIFMA X5.5.
10.17 Adjustment tests for adjustable keyboard surfaces and input device	14. Adjustment keyboards adjustment tests	Same test as before for keyboards. New product category; input device support (load of 5 lbs instead of 10 lbs for the cycling test).
10.18 Work surface vertical adjustment tests	N.A.	New test. Consistent with BIFMA X5.5.
10.19	N.A.	Possible out-stop test for receding door 5 cycles only.
11. Dislodgment test	13. Dislodgment test	Same as before. (It will probably change).
12. Pull Force	9.7.2.3 Lateral file drawers pull test 12.6 Drawers pull force	This test now applies to any extendible member. The pass/fail criteria is now 11.2 lbf instead of 3 lbf; this is consistent with BIFMA X 5.5
Informative annex – Acoustical Performance	N.A.	No pass/fail criteria; only information related to acoustical performance of panels.