

CINDY RYBORZ

MARKETING MANAGER DATA CENTRES EMEA AT CORNING OPTICAL COMMUNICATIONS

Third-party certification is undoubtedly important. Given that the testing is based on standardised procedures, it represents an unbiased quality statement and guarantees consistent results across different test labs. This gives installers and end users peace of mind that network components will perform as expected, regardless of vendor, and work together seamlessly.

In some scenarios, however, it is more challenging to guarantee consistency when it comes to repeatability and reproducibility of test results, particularly when new regulations are first introduced.

The Construction Products Regulation (CPR), for example, was put in place in 2017 to ensure uniform classification criteria for fire performance of cables. This saw accredited test labs around Europe tasked with qualifying products from electrical and communication cabling providers to ensure circulation of safe, high quality cabling.

Stringent test procedures for all labs to follow were defined. Yet, without an industry-wide control mechanism in place to guarantee repeatability and reproducibility it could allow some variation between test labs. For example, parameters such as airflow, which didn't have distinct

requirements in the standard, were proven to have a strong impact on burn test results.

Over time these standards are refined and consolidated, but the key point here is that while third-party certification is important, it should be supplementary to a manufacturer's own research and testing.

For Corning, like many other vendors producing and trading in the EU, we invest into internal research and development to make sure products meet the highest requirements to support safety and quality. Close collaboration with the industry and associations such as Europacable has

enabled us to increase the reliability of CPR testing and acquire extensive knowledge in the process.

It is this mixture of third-party certification and internal research and development that truly inspires confidence in performance and compliance.

'THE KEY POINT HERE IS THAT WHILE THIRD-PARTY CERTIFICATION IS IMPORTANT, IT SHOULD OF COURSE BE SUPPLEMENTARY TO A MANUFACTURER'S OWN RESEARCH AND TESTING.'

