



The Million Dollar Question

Who long will it take to dry ?

Following our involvement in the 2007 floods we have examined drying time data. The data sample spans across 1156 properties.

Maximum and Minimum Values

Maximum	251
Minimum	7

Statistical Functions

Mean	85
Standard deviation	52
Coefficient of variation	163

The drying periods are from the day the first inspection to the day the “drying certificate” was issued. This revealed the average drying period was 85 calendar days.

This data does not however take into account the depth of flood water or the period of time the water was retained in the property. What the data clearly indicates is that drying equipment must be in a property on average 85 days to reach moisture readings suitable to allow reinstatement to commence. 85 days for drying equipment to be on site does not take into account periods that the policy holder may turn the equipment off. The data also does not allow for delays from the date of the last reading and the issue of the drying certificate which may be a couple of days due to administration backlog. Whilst 85 days is the mean total of days that the equipment was on hire it would be unrealistic to assume the equipment had been on 24 hours, 7 days a week.

What was also interesting was that during experience with properties in the flood affected area that were taking longer to reach adequate readings these were predominately due to a pre-existing defects i.e, failure or breakdown of existing damp proof course or the lack of sufficient damp proof course. Each individual property must be surveyed on its own merit, the question has to be raised would insurers funds be better spent undertaking a remedial damp repair rather than spending more time and money on drying equipment.

Drying times cannot be allowed to reach the mean value without an interim inspection by a Building Surveyor to consider the cause of the high readings which in many of the cases was proven not to be flood related and the damp probably existed prior to the incident.