**Q&A: ANSI/BIFMA e3 LEVELS**

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| **QUESTIONS** | | **ANSWERS** |
| 1 | What is **BIFMA e3**?  …and what is **LEVEL**? | The *ANSI/BIFMA e3 Furniture Sustainability Standard* is a **voluntary standard used to establish performance criteria for the product, its manufacturing facility and organization** which assesses three elements; environmental, health & wellness and social impacts.  Organizations can achieve conformance to this standard through **various prerequisite** (*8 points*) **and optional credits** (103 *points*). Optional credits can be achieved in any of the three elements. Each credit has one or more points that are accumulated towards a level of conformance.  **LEVEL®** is a third-party certification program for this sustainability standard.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | *LEVEL 1* | *\*32 to 48 total points; at least 5 of which are product related points* | | *LEVEL 2* | *\*49 to 68 total points; at least 16 of which are product related points* | | *LEVEL 3* | *\*69 to 111; at least 26 of which are product related points* |   *Products certified going forward are certified to e3 v2019.* |
| 2 | How do I find out what LEVEL a product has achieved for BIFMA e3? | Office Furniture SA programs mandate minimum BIFMA e3 LEVELS for compliance;   * Office Seating = **LEVEL 1** * Workspaces = **LEVEL 2**   Additional information:  <https://www.bifma.org/mpage/levelcertifiedproducts> |
| 3 | If a client wants to ensure their product has a **specific Sustainability criteria** in mind (ie. low emissions), would asking for BIFMA **LEVEL 3** ensure the product is better in emissions than a product with a **LEVEL 1** or **LEVEL 2**? | No.  For those who are interested in a specific area of sustainability, it is **recommended to add those specific credits into their specifications**.  Manufacturers currently choose whether their break-down summary of credits earned is either public or private. Those that keep them private will share them upon request. |
| 4 | Will a LEVEL 3 product provide the most **points towards LEEDS?** | No.  LEVEL 1 and LEVEL 2 could also achieve the same number of points towards LEEDS as a LEVEL 3.  Credit 7.6.1 (*point towards LEEDS*) is a mandatory prerequisite credit for any LEVEL (1,2 or 3).  All SA products are guaranteed compliant to at least this 1 point towards LEEDS in their BIFMA Certification.  It is recommended to add specific points towards LEEDS within your solicitation if this is a goal. |
| 5 | Does a LEVEL 3 guarantee a more **durable or better performing** product than a LEVEL 1 or LEVEL 2? | No.  The maximum points any product can achieve for durability is 2 (*under credit 6.2.1*) – for any LEVEL.  All SA products are already compliant to these 2 points through the mandatory technical specification criteria (*ANSI/BIFMA performance testing from a ISO 17025 Certified Laboratory*). |
| 6 | Does a LEVEL 3 guarantee a better **ergonomic** product? | No.  The maximum points any product can achieve for ergonomics is 1 (*under credit 7.4.1*) – for any LEVEL.  SA technical specifications include *BIFMA G1-Ergonomics Guideline for Furniture Used in Office Work Spaces Designed for Computer Use* for applicable products. Therefore, these SA products are already compliant to this 1 point. |
| 7 | Is LEVEL 3 **a better option** for the GoC? | The higher the credits the **more sustainable** the product. But remember, this could also reduce competition for your requirement as not all SA Suppliers have achieved LEVEL 3 for their products.  PSPC Procurement has no issues with requesting a higher sustainability standard. However, it’s recommended you **ask for these specific credits** to justify your specific environmental goals (*remember a LEVEL 1 product could have the same number of credits in safety, durability and performance as a LEVEL 3 product*).   |  | | --- | | Another sustainable option before buying new, is to consider surplus assets from other Departments: [GCTransfer (gcsurplus.ca)](https://www.gcsurplus.ca/mn-eng.cfm?snc=wftat&sc=mp) (*this is sustainable too!*) | |
| 8 | Are there any **equivalency’s** to BIFMA e3 LEVELS? | The trade agreements are very specific on allowing equivalencies where they exist. In terms of BIFMA e3 LEVELs, we must consider ***equivalencies*** in our procurements if a Supplier claims their products are **equivalent**.  *If a Supplier claims they have an equivalent to a BIFMA e3 LEVEL, the Suppliers claim (with their own justifications) should be sent and evaluated by the Technical Authority of the SA for validation.* |