SAS International's Malcolm Stamper takes a closer look at metal ceiling specification, and finds a tailored approach usually works best

Made to measure

WITH INCREASING DEMANDS BEING MADE ON the construction industry, from both the design and sustainability angles, it is vital all options are considered when specifying a ceiling solution.

Metal ceiling systems are both durable and versatile, providing users with design solutions that can meet the most stringent of design briefs. Metal ceiling tiles offer a cost-effective and sustainable solution; tiles retain a residual value and are recyclable at end of life avoiding associated costly landfill charges.

While traditional suspended ceiling systems are still an option, it is not necessary to take a 'best-fit solution'. Each ceiling is different – not all buildings and projects are square - and a tailored approach should be utilised whenever possible. With specification criteria ranging from acoustics, design, durability, installation, paint finish, accessibility, prefabrication and integration, metal ceiling systems are able to fulfil various specification and sector demands.

There are four principle types of metal ceiling systems – clip-in tiles, lay-in tiles, linear and tartan grid tiles and acoustic rafts or modules – which offer an impressive range of versatility, making metal ceilings ideal for any location.

With ease of cleaning and secure ceiling voids, clip-in tiles are ideal for hospitals and food preparation areas along with transport environments. Tiles are supported by a concealed suspension grid and can be demounted from the grid or hinged downwards.

To ensure performance in all environments both sides of the tile can be painted, this is ideal for areas with high humidity, such as kitchens.

Traditional modular lay-in tiles can be customised by utilising differing grid suspension options. Tiles are generally provided in cassette form with acoustic fleece, pad and backing foil.

The range of grid includes traditional tee grid to flush aluminium finishes, with tiles laid directly in. Flexible offices can be accommodated with linear recesses for partitioning removing any potential damage to the ceiling plane.

Offering the facility to manufacture tiles in millimetre increments and mega panels sizes up to 1500 x 1500mm, these systems provide functionality and outstanding performance with a range of cost effective design options.

This system is ideal for offices - both new and refurbishments - due to their ability to meet any building's grid size. To meet design requirements the supporting profile and tiles can be providing in a range of shapes to allow waveform or radial designs to be created.

SAS International's System 330 'CoolCeil' offers an optional incorporated Radiant Chilled Ceiling system allowing a sustainable room comfort element to be specified which can help towards a building achieving a higher BREEAM rating.

Ideal for education, acoustic lighting rafts or modules are directly suspended from a flat structural soffit or within coffers which allows free air movement to the structural slab for natural thermal mass cooling.

SAS worked closely with architects and M&E consultants when developing System 600, which has allowed SAS to offer a wide range of cost effective solutions. This system works well within a variety of environments - meeting acoustic and ventilation requirements for schools, and providing flexibility for partitioning, important for large office spaces. ■

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