NATIONAL TERRAZZO &
MOSAIC ASSOCIATION

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TECHNICAL BULLETIN #S-4 8/13, 9/17

(Formerly TB#12)

SAND CUSHION TERRAZZO

Because of its long history of excellent performance, the sand cushion terrazzo system has been traditionally classified as the premier version of cement terrazzo systems.

The sand cushion terrazzo system is designed to be installed in a minimum thickness of 2 · inches. If conditions allow, a full 3-inch depression is much preferred.

The execution consists of a dusting of sand over the concrete substrate, which is covered with an isolation membrane: (ASTM A 185 D 2103 Type 13300, 4 to 6 mils. polyethylene sheeting, or ASTM D 226, 15 lb. non-perforated roofing felt). The dusting of sand applied under the membrane sheeting provides separation from the concrete substrate. A 2-inch thickness of low slump mortar underbed under-bed reinforced with a 16 or 18 self-furring gauge galvanized welded wire mesh is placed over the membrane and pulled up into the under-bed. Metal or plastic divider strips are vertically inserted and tightly troweled into the under-bed while this material is still in a plastic condition.

These divider strips perform two essential roles in this system. The first reason is aesthetics since they provide design color changes; the second is that they control the anticipated shrinkage that results from curing the floor. The recommended spacing of the divider strip is 4 ft. on centers, or 5 ft. if the under-bed thickness is increased to 3 inches or more. The standard · inch thick terrazzo topping is placed in the panels formed by the strips when the under-bed has properly hardened. Supported by the concrete slab, the system is designed to perform independently from the substrate.