

Updates to the Building Code will make it easier to comply

Posted: 27 June 2019

Building Controls Update 249

Following consultation processes that took place last year and earlier this year, on 27 June 2019 MBIE published changes to Building Code documents to make it easier to comply.

We appreciate everyone who took the time to contribute during the consultation processes for these changes, and we value the feedback that was received.

The changes we have decided to proceed with are responsive to the needs of the building sector and will support housing densification, healthier homes, and easier pathways to Building Code compliance.



Changes to be made to the Building Code

MBIE will be making the following updates to the Building Code:

- Aligning the provisions for hollow-core flooring with the Concrete Structures Standard to allow increased depth of hollow-core flooring. This gives building owners more options, and makes it easier to comply with the Building Code (amending B1/VM1).
- Making light steel framing a standard compliance solution, which will reduce the need for peer review around the structural design of light steel-framed buildings. This will give compliance certainty for designers and developers considering the option of using light steel framing (amending B1/VM1, B1/AS1, and B2/AS1).
- Providing a new test method for building facades up to 25 m using the [BRANZ Evaluation Method \(https://www.branz.co.nz/cms_show_download.php?id=dbd81e3cd651458bb4c683253cf2ee4c1191783d\)](https://www.branz.co.nz/cms_show_download.php?id=dbd81e3cd651458bb4c683253cf2ee4c1191783d) as a way to confirm building cladding is weathertight (new test method E2/VM2).
- Adding extractor fans as a compliant way to ventilate bathrooms and kitchens, so that homeowners can more easily comply with the new Healthy Homes Standards (amending G4/AS1).
- Updating the Water Supplies and Foul Water sections of the Building Code to cite the most recent joint Australian/New Zealand plumbing and drainage standards. This will make it easier to show compliance, and aligns with current industry best practice (amending G13/AS1, G13/VM2, G13/AS2 and G13/AS3; amending G12/VM1, G12/AS1 and G12/AS2).
- Bringing together six separate Fire Acceptable Solution documents into one all-encompassing document that is clearer, more consistent, and covers things that weren't included in the previous version. This means less ambiguity and confusion across the sector about which document to use, and an easier way for people to find the information they need to do their job. The changes are summarised in the [first edition 2019 C/AS2 fact sheet \(https://www.building.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/c-protection-from-fire/c-clauses-c1-c6/fact-sheet-for-the-first-edition-2019-fire-acceptable-solution-cas2/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/c-protection-from-fire/c-clauses-c1-c6/fact-sheet-for-the-first-edition-2019-fire-acceptable-solution-cas2/).

Areas needing more work before changes are made

MBIE has decided to delay the following updates, which were proposed in the consultation, so that further work can be done on them:

- Foundation design for expansive soils – the feedback we received on this said that more analysis needs to take place to make sure the proposal is effective (B1 Structure).
- Simple House – until a new compliance pathway for foundation design for expansive soils is implemented, feedback we received said that this part of

the Building Code should stay the same (SH/AS1).

- Ventilation – we had proposed updating the citation of the Standard used for ventilation and air conditioning design to the most recent (2012) version. The submissions we received said that more technical analysis should take place before this is done (G4/AS1).
- Adding content from the external cladding guidance document into the new C/AS2 will need to be further reviewed.

Key dates for using solutions that are changing

The current Building Code solutions will continue to apply for building consent applications lodged until 31 October 2019. If the existing methods are used after 1 November 2019, they must be considered as an alternative solution proposal.

We also received a number of submissions suggesting improvements to our consultation process. We will review these and make some changes to improve our future consultations.

Next consultation opens in August

The next biannual update consultation will open on the 5th of August. We encourage you and your colleagues to keep up to date with future consultations and other changes by [subscribing to the Building Controls Updates \(https://www.building.govt.nz/about-building-performance/news-and-updates/subscribe-old/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/about-building-performance/news-and-updates/subscribe-old/).

Thanks for your support during these consultation processes.
