

E2 External Moisture

Verification Method E2/VM1

**Cladding systems of buildings up to
10 m in height – including junctions with
windows, doors and other penetrations**

FOURTH EDITION | EFFECTIVE 28 JULY 2025

Preface

Preface

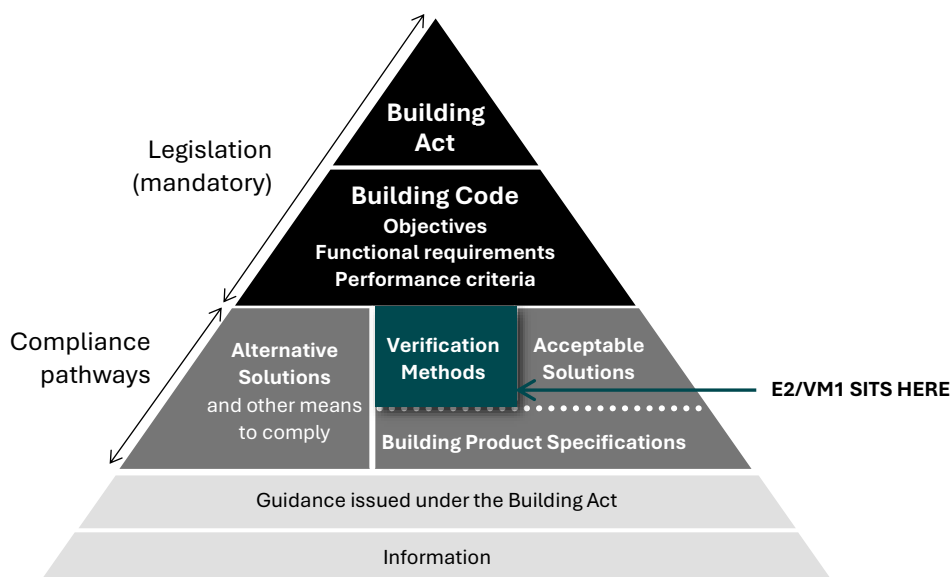
Document status

This document (E2/VM1) is a verification method issued under section 22 (1) of the Building Act 2004 and is effective on 28 July 2025. It does not apply to building consent applications submitted before 28 July 2025. The previous Verification Method E2/VM1 Third Edition, as amended, can be used to show compliance until 31 July 2026 and can be used for building consent applications submitted before 1 August 2026.

Building Code regulatory system

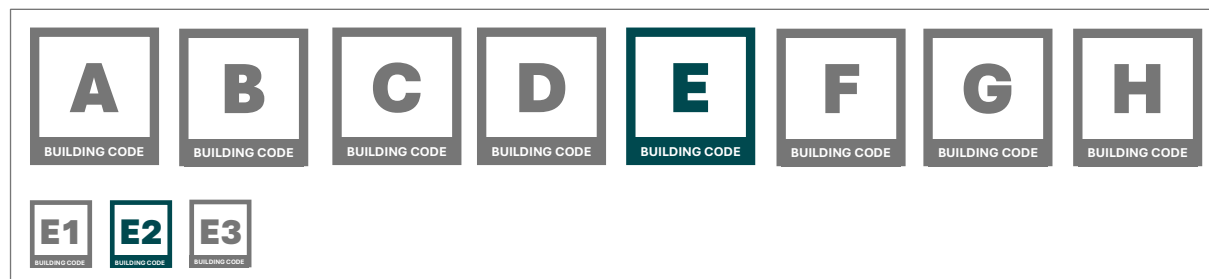
Each verification method outlines the provisions of the Building Code that it relates to. Complying with an acceptable solution or verification method are ways of complying with that part of the Building Code. Other options for establishing compliance are listed in [section 19 of the Building Act](#).

Schematic of the Building Code system



A building design must take into account all parts of the Building Code. The Building Code is located in Schedule 1 of the Building Regulations 1992 and available online at www.legislation.govt.nz.

The part of the Building Code that this verification method relates to is E2 External Moisture. Information on the scope of this document is provided in [Part 1. General](#).



Further information about the Building Code, including objectives, functional requirements, performance criteria, acceptable solutions, and verification methods, is available at www.building.govt.nz.

Main changes in this version and features of this document

Main changes in this version

This verification method is the fourth edition of E2/VM1. The main changes from the previous version are:

- The document has been published in a standalone format and the layout has been revised to improve clarity. This includes using a common structure for headings and text throughout the verification method.
- Minor amendments have been made to correct typos, grammar, cross-references, punctuation, wording, and formatting of the document. This includes changes to headings, paragraphs, tables and figures, table and figure notes, and definitions. These amendments do not affect the level of performance required in the document but may assist in the interpretation of the requirements.
- The verification method now refers to the Building Product Specifications in relation to windows and doors in Paragraph 2.1.1.2(e).
- References have been revised to reflect the documents cited in this acceptable solution in Appendix A.
- Definitions have been revised to reflect the terms used in this acceptable solution in Appendix B.

People using this document should check for amendments on a regular basis. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment may amend any part of any acceptable solution or verification method at any time. Up-to-date versions of acceptable solutions or verification methods are available from www.building.govt.nz.

Features of this document

- For the purposes of Building Code compliance, the standards and documents referenced in this verification method must be the editions, along with their specific amendments listed in Appendix A.
- Words in *italic* are defined at the end of this document in Appendix B.
- Hyperlinks are provided to cross-references within this document and to external websites and appear with a [blue underline](#).
- Appendices to this verification method are part of, and have equal status to, the verification method. Figures are informative only and the wording of the paragraphs takes precedence. Text boxes headed ‘COMMENT’ occur throughout this document and are for guidance purposes only.
- A consistent number system has been used throughout this document. The first number indicates the Part of the document, the second indicates the Section in the Part, the third is the Subsection, and the fourth is the Paragraph. This structure is illustrated as follows:

2	Part
2.5	Section
2.5.3	Subsection
2.5.3.1	Paragraph
2.5.3.1(a)	Paragraph (as a portion of the relevant paragraph)
2.5.3.1(a)(i)	Paragraph (as a portion of the relevant paragraph)

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General

Part 1. General

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Scope of this document

1.1.1.1 This verification method sets out methods of compliance for external moisture provisions related to the penetration of water for *cladding systems*. It can be used to demonstrate compliance for:

- a) *exterior wall cladding systems* in [Part 2. Wall cladding systems](#); and/or
- b) pitched roofing systems in [Part 3. Roof cladding systems](#).

1.1.1.2 Additional limitations on the scope of this verification method are provided in Subsections [2.1.1](#) and [3.1.1](#).

1.1.2 Items outside the scope of this document

1.1.2.1 This verification method does not contain provisions for skillion roofs or commercial or industrial roofing.

1.1.3 Compliance pathway

1.1.3.1 This verification method is one option for establishing compliance with the Building Code functional requirement E2.2 and the performance criterion in E2.3.2 in clause E2 External Moisture.

1.1.3.2 If the relevant part or parts of this verification method solution cannot be followed in full, use an alternative means to demonstrate compliance.

1.2 Using this verification method

1.2.1 Test facilities

1.2.1.1 The tests in [Part 2. Wall cladding systems](#) shall be undertaken in a test facility with IANZ or equivalent accreditation for testing to the procedures of AS/NZS 4284 with the criteria detailed in [Part 2. Wall cladding systems](#).

COMMENT: AS/NZS 4284 is modified in [Part 2. Wall cladding systems](#) for generic domestic oriented *cladding* because the standard was developed primarily for testing specific, non-absorptive facades, and curtain *wall* systems on high-rise commercial *buildings*.

1.2.2 Building Product Specifications

1.2.2.1 This verification method refers to the Building Product Specifications for *building* product standards and specifications in relation to their manufacture, fabrication, testing, quality control, physical properties, performance, installation, and/or maintenance.

1.2.2.2 The Building Product Specifications cannot be used in isolation to demonstrate compliance with any requirements of the Building Code. To comply with E2/VM1, *building* products conforming to the Building Product Specifications must be used with the scope, limitations, and other applicable requirements set out in this verification method.

Wall cladding systems

Part 2. Wall cladding systems

2.1 Demonstrating compliance

2.1.1 Limitations

- 2.1.1.1 This part is limited to *wall cladding systems* and associated junctions with windows, doors, and other penetrations for *buildings* of importance Levels 1 or 2 as described in Table 1.1(a) of NZS 3604.
- 2.1.1.2 This part is restricted to *buildings* that:
- a) are either:
 - i) within the scope of NZS 3604, or
 - ii) based on NZS 3604 but require specific engineering input, provided the *framing* is of at least equivalent stiffness to the *framing* provisions of NZS 3604; and
 - b) are up to 3 storeys with a height measured from lowest ground level adjacent to the *building* to the highest point of the roof (except for chimneys, aerals and the like) of 10 m or less; and
 - c) are either:
 - i) within the *wind zones* covered by Section 5 of NZS 3604, or
 - ii) designed for a specific wind pressure up to a maximum ultimate limit state (ULS) of 2500 Pa; and
 - d) have *claddings* that include a drained and vented cavity of nominal 20 mm minimum depth with minimum ventilation opening of 1000 mm²/m at the foot, including any *claddings* that require a rigid *wall underlay* in accordance with Paragraphs 9.1.6.2 or 9.1.6.3 of Acceptable Solution E2/AS1; and
 - e) include window and door units that comply with Subsection 4.4.1 of the Building Product Specifications.

COMMENT: While the test specimens used for this verification method may include window and door units, it is only the junctions of these elements with other *cladding* elements that are assessed in the test.

2.1.2 Verification of the wall cladding system

- 2.1.2.1 Verification of the *wall cladding system* requires:
- a) a preconditioning pressure loading exposure (Subsection [2.3.1](#)); and
 - b) an extended series of tests undertaken in accordance with the water penetration test methodologies set out in AS/NZS 4284 (Subsections [2.3.2](#), [2.3.3](#), [2.3.4](#), and [2.3.5](#)).
- 2.1.2.2 The test results shall be expressed within the testing laboratory's test report in the format shown in [Appendix C. Test results](#).

COMMENT: It is generally expected that testing laboratories will provide a fulsome test report to the commissioning entity. These reports must include a summary table that shows, at minimum, the results from the tests required by this verification method.

- 2.1.2.3 To achieve compliance, any water that penetrates to the back of the *wetwall* through introduced defects and joints shall be controlled, where this means that:

Wall cladding systems

- a) water may contact battens and other cavity surfaces, but no water shall be transferred to the plane of the *wall underlay*, cavity air sealing or structural *framing* due to a design or systemic failure; and
 - b) water that may arrive on the *underlay* due to an 'isolated blemish' may be disregarded; and
 - c) no water may drip through an airspace within the cavity where it is possible for water to impact on a surface in the cavity and splash onto the *wall underlay*; and
 - d) spattering of water into the cavity through the introduced defects shall be ignored; and
 - e) during the *wetwall* test in Subsection 2.3.5, water may splash upward from the footer *flashing* provided the water is not held above any cavity obstruction.
- 2.1.2.4 Non-compliance with this verification method shall be the presence of water that is not controlled (as defined in Paragraph 2.1.2.3), or evidence of any water, either:
- a) on the removed surfaces of the cavity after carrying out the tests in Subsections 2.3.2, 2.3.3, and 2.3.4; and/or
 - b) during or after the test in Subsection 2.3.5.

2.2 Specimen details

2.2.1 Minimum specimen requirements

- 2.2.1.1 The minimum size of the *wall cladding* specimen to be tested shall be 2.4 m x 2.4 m.
- 2.2.1.2 Testing is to include representative samples of penetrating *building elements* or joints to be used.
- 2.2.1.3 *Cladding system* test specimens shall meet the Class 1 or Class 2 specimen requirements, as applicable, set out in Subsections 2.2.3 and 2.2.4. If any of these requirements are omitted from the specimen, then compliance with verification method for Class 1 or Class 2 cannot be claimed.

COMMENT: Suppliers may commission testing to provide product assurance for cladding systems intended to be available for use in multiple situations. In such cases, the test specimen must include all mandatory elements for the relevant Class in order for suppliers to claim the cladding system complies with either Class 1 or Class 2 of this verification method within its intended scope of use.

2.2.2 Underlay requirements for installation and testing

- 2.2.2.1 *Cladding systems* that rely on this verification method shall have a rigid *wall underlay* installed in accordance with Paragraph 9.1.6.4 of Acceptable Solution E2/AS1 when used in:
 - a) an Extra High *wind zone*; or
 - b) *buildings* designed for a specific wind pressure up to a maximum ultimate limit state (ULS) of 2500 Pa.
- 2.2.2.2 For verification testing, a flexible *wall underlay* may be used, unless the *cladding* to be tested includes a rigid *underlay* as part of the *cladding system* and its removal would compromise the structural fixings or support for the *cladding*.

COMMENT: Testing a *cladding* with flexible *underlay* is allowed in order to make testing quicker and easier. It is expected that *cladding systems* with a cavity within the scope of this verification method will perform better with a rigid *underlay* than with a flexible *underlay*, although this has not been proven.

Wall cladding systems

2.2.3 Class 1 cladding systems

2.2.3.1 Class 1 requirements apply to *cladding systems* where:

- a) only vertical joints are required; and
- b) there are no penetrations through the *cladding*.

2.2.3.2 Class 1 test specimens shall include:

- a) vertical joints; and
- b) internal and external corners of the external *wall* junctions; and
- c) footer and header termination systems.

2.2.4 Class 2 cladding systems

2.2.4.1 Class 2 requirements apply to all *cladding systems* within the scope of this part that are not Class 1.

2.2.4.2 Class 2 test specimens shall include:

- a) vertical and horizontal *control joints*; and
- b) internal and external *wall* junctions; and
- c) windows and/or doors; and
- d) a *parapet* or *enclosed balustrade capping* with a *saddle flashing*, and
- e) a 200 mm diameter pipe penetration; and
- f) footer and header termination systems.

2.2.4.3 Class 2 test specimens shall have a 15 mm diameter round hole formed in the internal *lining* below the window to simulate the effect of power points, light switches and other air leakage through the internal *lining*. Where a *cladding* specimen is larger than 2.4 m x 2.4 m, an additional 15 mm hole shall be added for each 7 m² of *cladding* area (or part thereof).

2.2.4.4 Class 2 test specimens may also include other details relevant to the use of the *cladding system* on the *building*, such as:

- a) *scupper* penetrations,
- b) meter boxes,
- c) junctions with other *cladding systems* or *building elements*,
- d) junctions where roof and *enclosed deck* terminations, gutters, or other features occur within *walls* (including within the sides of framed chimneys with *cladding*).

COMMENT: The inclusion of other additional details may enable manufacturers, suppliers and specifiers that commission tests to demonstrate compliance for a wider range of situations than those that the mandatory details cover. Test specimens should therefore include all *cladding* details or junctions for which compliance with this verification method is intended to be demonstrated and claimed, in addition to the mandatory specimen requirements.

2.2.5 Specimen provisions for observing water penetration

2.2.5.1 Water penetration shall be observed in accordance with one of the following options:

- a) For specimens with a rigid *wall underlay*, adjacent to critical elements where visual access is required, a proportion of the *underlay* shall be made using transparent material of sufficient structural capability and similar airtightness to the specified rigid *underlay* material, and able to resist the applied wind pressures. The proportion shall be at least 2%, but shall be small enough that it does not affect the ability of the specimen to represent the performance of the *underlay* within the *cladding system*; or

Wall cladding systems

- b) For specimens that do not include a rigid *wall underlay*, adjacent to critical elements where visual access is required, the *wall underlay* shall be cut through and removed, or fastened back onto the *framing*, with a rigid transparent internal *lining* used to support the air pressure. It is required that between 2% and 100% of the area of the *wall underlay* (or equivalent) be so removed; or
- c) For specimens that include a flexible or a rigid *underlay*, small video cameras and/ or borescopes shall be installed within the cavity to provide a clear view of all critical elements where visual access is required. Borescopes and cameras must be positioned clear of all junctions, and installed in a manner that does not affect the airtightness of the air barrier (rigid *underlay* or internal *wall lining*) or the path of any moisture that enters the cavity.

COMMENT: The use of borescopes and cameras requires care to achieve these requirements, but this may be the most appropriate option in situations such as when other AS/NZS 4284 tests are to be performed on the same specimen. It may also help resolve doubts about whether the replacement of a proportion of the *lining* or *underlay* with a transparent material will affect the performance of the *cladding*.

2.3 Test procedure

2.3.1 Preconditioning

- 2.3.1.1 A preconditioning loading of 1515 Pa shall be applied to the external face of the test specimen for a period of 1 minute of positive pressure followed by a period of 1 minute of negative 1515 Pa pressure (suction).

COMMENT: As the ventilated cavity is subjected to the same applied pressure, the material serving as the air seal must be able to sustain the same applied loading. Where the test *wall* has a permeable *wall underlay* or membrane, the internal *wall lining* will be required to sustain the serviceability limit state (SLS) wind pressures.

2.3.2 Series 1: Water penetration test by static pressure

- 2.3.2.1 The water penetration test by static pressure shall be conducted in accordance with Clause 8.5 of AS/NZS 4284 with a test pressure of 455 Pa.

2.3.3 Series 1: Water penetration test by cyclic pressure

- 2.3.3.1 The water pressure test by cyclic pressure shall be conducted in accordance with Clause 8.6 of AS/NZS 4284 but with Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the test omitted.
- 2.3.3.2 The cyclic pressure limits shall be 455 – 910 Pa for the prescribed Stage 3 test.

2.3.4 Series 2: Water management testing procedure

- 2.3.4.1 The Series 2 water management testing procedure shall be as follows:
 - a) at least four 6 mm diameter holes shall be formed through the *wetwall*, as allowed in Clause 9.9 of AS/NZS 4284, including at least one hole in each of the following places:
 - i) through the window/*wall* joint at 3/4 height of both window/door jambs; and
 - ii) immediately above the head flashing; and
 - iii) through the external sealing of the horizontal and vertical joints; and
 - iv) above any other *wetwall* penetration detail.
 - b) then repeat:
 - i) the Series 1: Water penetration test by static pressure in Subsection [2.3.2](#) and

Wall cladding systems

- ii) the Series 1: Water penetration test by cyclic pressure in Subsection [2.3.3](#).

COMMENT: The introduction of defects is intended to simulate the failure of the primary weather-defence/sealing. The holes must only penetrate to the plane of the back of the *wetwall* so the water management of the cavity can be assessed.

- 2.3.4.2 Immediately upon the conclusion of the water management testing procedure (within 30 minutes), the layers behind the *wetwall* that support air pressure (including sealing in the window trim cavity) shall be removed, and any evidence of non-compliance (as defined in Paragraph [2.1.2.4](#)) noted.

2.3.5 Series 3: Wetwall test

- 2.3.5.1 The Series 3 *wetwall* test shall consist of a water penetration test by static pressure to be conducted:
- a) in accordance with Clause 8.5 of AS/NZS 4284; and
 - b) with a test pressure differential of 50 Pa applied across the *wetwall* only.

2.4 Transitional provisions

2.4.1 Existing verification certificates remain in effect

- 2.4.1.1 Verification certificates issued for *cladding systems* tested in accordance with the following prior versions of Verification Method E2/VM1 continue to remain in effect:
- a) certificates issued between 1 August 2011 and 31 March 2019 tested in accordance with Verification Method E2/VM1 Third Edition Amendments 5 to 7; and
 - b) certificates issued between 30 November 2018 and 31 July 2026 tested in accordance with Verification Method E2/VM1 Third Edition Amendments 8 to 10.

COMMENT: The Third Edition of this verification method, including amendments, was previously published in one document alongside Acceptable Solutions E2/AS1, E2/AS2 and E2/AS3.

Roof cladding systems

Part 3. Roof cladding systems

3.1 Demonstrating compliance

3.1.1 Limitations

3.1.1.1 This part is limited to *roof cladding systems* with a *roof pitch* 15° or more above a *roof space* and comprising:

- a) any tiled roofing system; or
- b) other ventilated roofing systems or skylights.

3.1.1.2 The *roof cladding system* shall not be:

- a) commercial or industrial roofing; or
- b) Used on a skillion *roof*.

3.1.2 Verification of the roof cladding system

3.1.2.1 The performance of the *roof cladding system* shall be compared to a control roofing system, in accordance with AS 4046.9.

3.1.2.2 To achieve compliance, the water penetration must be less than, or equal to, the control specimen.

References

Appendix A. References

For the purposes of Building Code compliance, the standards referenced in this verification method must be the editions, along with their specific amendments, listed below.

Standards New Zealand

NZS 3604:2011	Timber-framed buildings
AS/NZS 4284:2008	Testing of building facades

Where quoted

[2.1.1.1](#), [2.1.1.2](#), [Definitions](#)
[1.2.1.1](#), [2.3.2.1](#), [2.3.3.1](#),
[2.3.4.1](#), [2.3.5.1](#)

These standards can be accessed from www.standards.govt.nz.

Standards Australia

AS 4046.9-2002 (R2015)	Methods of testing roof tiles, Method 9: Determination of dynamic weather resistance
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Where quoted

[1.2.1.1](#), [3.1.2](#)

This standard can be accessed from www.standards.org.au.

Definitions

Appendix B. Definitions

These definitions are specific to this verification method. Other defined terms italicised within the definitions are provided in clause A2 of the Building Code.

Term	Definition
Building	Has the meaning given to it by sections 8 and 9 of the Building Act 2004.
Building element	Any structural and non-structural component or assembly incorporated into or associated with a <i>building</i> . Included are <i>fixtures</i> , services, <i>drains</i> , permanent mechanical installations for access, glazing, partitions, ceilings and temporary supports.
Capping	A <i>flashing</i> formed to cover the top of an <i>enclosed balustrade</i> or <i>parapet</i> . Also known as a coping.
Cladding	The exterior weather-resistant surface of a <i>building</i> . COMMENT: Includes any supporting substrate and, if applicable, surface treatment.
Cladding system	The outside or exterior weather-resistant surface of a <i>building</i> ; including <i>roof cladding</i> and <i>roof underlays</i> , wall <i>cladding</i> and <i>wall underlays</i> , and cavity components, rooflights, windows, doors and all penetrations, <i>flashings</i> , seals, joints and junctions.
Control joints	A joint designed to prevent damage by accommodating movement. See also Expansion joint .
Deck	An open platform projecting from an exterior wall of a <i>building</i> and supported by <i>framing</i> . A <i>deck</i> may be over enclosed internal spaces, or may be open underneath. Refer also Enclosed deck . Also known as a balcony.
Drain	A pipe normally laid below ground level including fittings and equipment and intended to convey <i>foul water</i> or <i>External moisture</i> to an <i>outfall</i> .
Drained cavity	A cavity space, immediately behind a wall <i>cladding</i> , that has vents at the base of the wall. Also known as a drained and vented cavity. A <i>drained cavity</i> assists drying by allowing water which occasionally penetrates the wall <i>cladding</i> system to drain to the exterior of the <i>building</i> , and any remaining moisture to dry by evaporation.
Enclosed balustrade	A timber-framed barrier with <i>cladding</i> across all exposed faces. Refer also Parapet .
Enclosed deck	A <i>deck</i> , whether over an interior or exterior space, that has an impermeable upper surface and is closed on the underside. May also be known as a balcony.
Expansion joint	A joint designed to prevent damage by accommodating movement. See also Control joint .
External wall	Any vertical exterior face of a <i>building</i> consisting of <i>primary</i> and/or <i>secondary elements</i> intended to provide protection against the outdoor environment.
Fixture	An article intended to remain permanently attached to and form part of a <i>building</i> .

Definitions

Term	Definition
Flashing	A component, formed from a rigid or flexible <i>waterproof</i> material, that drains or deflects water back outside the <i>cladding system</i> .
Framing	Timber members to which <i>lining</i> , <i>cladding</i> , flooring, or decking is attached; or which are depended upon for supporting the structure, or for resisting forces applied to it.
Lining	The rigid sheet covering for a wall, ceiling, or other interior surface.
Parapet	A timber-framed wall that extends above the level of the roof <i>cladding</i> . Refer also Enclosed balustrade .
Roof	That part of a building having its upper surface exposed to the outside and at an angle of 60° or less to the horizontal.
Roof underlay	An absorbent permeable <i>building paper</i> that absorbs or collects condensation or water in association with <i>roof cladding</i> performance.
Saddle flashing	A <i>flashing</i> used to weatherproof the junction between a horizontal and vertical surface.
Scupper	An opening in a <i>parapet</i> or <i>enclosed balustrade</i> to allow water to drain into a rainwater head.
Specific design	Design and detailing for compliance with the Building Code, of a proposed part or parts of a <i>building</i> which are not shown in this acceptable solution
Underlay	The material used behind a <i>roof</i> or <i>wall cladding</i> . Also refer to Wall underlay and Roof underlay .
Wall	Refer External wall .
Wall underlay	A building paper, synthetic material or rigid sheathing used as part of the <i>wall cladding system</i> to assist the control of moisture by ensuring moisture which occasionally penetrates the <i>wall cladding</i> is directed back to the exterior of the <i>building</i> .
Waterproof and waterproofing	The complete and total resistance of a <i>building element</i> to the ingress of any moisture.
Wetwall	The exterior <i>cladding</i> on a wall with a <i>drained cavity</i> .
Wind zone	Categorisation of wind force experienced on a particular site as determined in NZS 3604 Section 5. <div> <p>COMMENT: Maximum ultimate limit state speeds are:</p> <p>Low <i>wind zone</i> = wind speed of 32 m/s</p> <p>Medium <i>wind zone</i> = wind speed of 37 m/s</p> <p>High <i>wind zone</i> = wind speed of 44 m/s</p> <p>Very High <i>wind zone</i> = wind speed of 50 m/s</p> <p>Extra High <i>wind zone</i> = wind speed of 55 m/s.</p> <p><i>Specific design</i> is required for wind speeds greater than 55 m/s.</p> </div>

Definitions

Appendix C. Test results

C.1 Recording test results

C.1.1 Pro forma

C.1.1.1 Test results shall be recorded in a table as shown in [Table C.1.1.1](#) within the usual test report of the particular test laboratory.

Table C.1.1.1: Test results

Paragraph [C.1.1.1](#)

Test	Result
Series 1: Water penetration test by static pressure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test pressure: 455 Pa • Duration: 15 minutes 	
Series 1: Water penetration test by cyclic pressure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test pressure: 455 – 910 Pa • Duration: 5 minutes 	
Series 2: Water management testing Static water penetration test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test pressure: 455 Pa • Duration: 15 minutes 	
Series 2: Water management testing Cyclic water penetration test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test pressure 455–910 Pa • Duration 5 minutes 	
Series 3: Wetwall test Static water penetration test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test pressure 50 Pa • Duration 15 minutes 	
Additional water penetration testing and results (where applicable)	
Comments	

BUILDING PERFORMANCE



CONTACT DETAILS PO Box 1473, Wellington 6140 | T 0800 242 243 | E info@building.govt.nz

For more information, visit building.govt.nz

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