

BCTRAG March 2019 meeting

Last updated: 20 May 2019

Summary and materials of the 5 March 2019 meeting of the Building Code Technical Risk Advisory Group (BCTRAG).



Highlights

The attendees agreed that the function of BCTRAG is to identify and assess technical risks and opportunities within the Building Code that focus on:

- ensuring the Building Code System remains fit for purpose
- providing clarity on performance requirements between the sector and the regulator
- solutions that enable innovation
- advice on the wider impacts of regulatory changes.

The group also agreed on the following definition of technical risk:

- Technical building performance risks or events with sector implications.
- Emerging opportunities to improve or innovate within the Building Code system that require a technical change.
- Inappropriate existing technical performance settings or compliance pathways.
- Recent New Zealand or global events with a technical building performance impact.

The Manager, Building Performance and Engineering (BPE) provided an update on MBIE's business priorities including developing a Building Code operating model and a 10-year strategic plan for the Building Code. The Policy Director gave an overview of the Building System Legislative Reform Programme, which is currently out for consultation.

<http://mbie5.cwp.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/building-code-technical-risk-advisory-group/bctrag-march-2019-meeting/>

BCTRAG March 2019 minutes

[PDF 626 KB]

<https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/bctrag/bctrag-march-2019-minutes.pdf>

BCTRAG March 2019 agenda

[PDF 420 KB]

<https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/bctrag/bctrag-march-2019-agenda.pdf>

BCTRAG March 2019 presentation

[PDF 440 KB]

<https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/bctrag/bctrag-march-2019-presentation.pdf>

The absence of building consent authority (BCA) representation on BCTRAG was raised. Following the March meeting, MBIE sought nominations for BCA representatives. Three BCA representatives have now been appointed and will attend the June meeting.

Risks discussed

MBIE received 16 submissions ahead of the March meeting, and identified six themes from these submissions.

A common theme raised relating to all four risks is the need for more education and industry awareness.

The two risks that were not discussed at the March meeting will be considered for the June meeting agenda.

Cross-laminated timber

The group discussed the use and reliability of cross-laminated timber (CLT). Specifically it was noted that the risk of delamination in a fire is highly dependent on the method and size of lamination. It was generally agreed that this is a matter for industry to manage and that product testing is just part of normal business.

It was commented that all new products entering the market need to be tested or 'do their time' to show they meet the Building Code. It was noted that CodeMark is an option as a national approval scheme for products.

Buckling restrained braces

This bracing technology has been in use for many years in the United States and has been tested extensively overseas. This design feature is becoming more popular in New Zealand but needs to be 'road tested' before being brought into the Building Code.

Industry needs to review buckling restrained braces (BRB) calculation methods and a potential option may be to place in the steel Standard.

The group noted that additional education and industry practice notes would standardise the way these features are incorporated and give guidance for suppliers regarding performance specifications.

It was further commented that a transition framework from a one-off Alternative Solution to a nationally approved solution does not currently exist.

Raised access flooring

Raised access flooring (RAFTs) were recognised as potentially having been missed in the assessment of non-structural elements in a building. Additional education and training regarding the design of RAFTs would support suppliers and industry to bridge any Code deficiencies.

The group recommended that MBIE consider if there are gaps in the Building Code for secondary structural elements that should require central regulation.

AS/NZS 1170

There was a robust discussion about the importance of AS/NZS 1170 to engineers, including moving regulatory aspects of compliance out of AS/NZS 1170 and into Acceptable Solutions and/or Verification Methods.

Next steps

The next meeting of the BCTRAG will be held 5 June in Wellington.

If you have any risks you would like to be raised for discussion, contact the BCTRAG member associated with your role in the industry.

- with compliance with the Building Act, it is published under section 175 of the Building Act
- with a Weathertight Services claim, it is published under section 12 of the Weathertight Homes Resolution Services Act 2006.