



NSW

Member Alert

BCA2004 Becomes Law from 1 May 2004

As mentioned in past editions of Building News, new amendments to the Building Codes of Australia (BCA) become law from 1 May 2004. These amendments vary in complexity from being simple editorial changes to the inclusion of new provisions for sound insulation.

In New South Wales, the Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR) is the government body responsible for adoption of the BCA as the States' building code. Although NSW is a signatory to an Intergovernment Agreement supporting national uniformity in building regulations, DIPNR produced State variations to the new BCA provisions. The main variations relate to BCA energy efficiency provisions.

Some of the more significant changes to the BCA are :

1. Changes to adopted Australian Standards

There are seven changes to Standards adopted in Volume 1 and six changes to Standards adopted in Volume 2 Housing Provisions.

One of the main changes to both Volumes is the adoption of the latest edition of AS3740 – *Waterproofing of wet areas in residential buildings*. The major change is that any room that has a timber substrate floor and contains a shower, spa, or bath must have the entire floor area waterproofed.

Another change is the adoption of an ABCB protocol that provides a framework for assessing the suitability of new software used to assess compliance with the energy efficiency requirements of Volume 2 Housing Provisions.

2. Changes to Volume 1 and Volume 2

The content of glazing standards referenced in the structural provisions of the BCA has been amended to place all public policy matters in the BCA. The amendments ensure that human impact considerations are applied to all glazing systems irrespective of which standard is used for their design.

Sound transmission and insulation provisions of the BCA have been upgraded and address:

Inclusion of a requirement to provide sound insulation between sole occupancy units and common areas and other nominated parts of the building :

- new terminology to describe airborne sound and impact sound. The Verification Methods use "weighted standardised" terms for in-situ sound measurement and the Deemed-to-Satisfy provisions use "weighted sound" and "weighted normalised" terms for laboratory calculation of sound levels. The new terms also incorporate a "spectrum adaption" term to measure a wider range of frequencies;
- a 5 to 10 dB increase in the level of airborne sound insulation for walls and floors separating dwellings/SOUS/common areas/other classes;
- introduction of field testing as an option for verifying compliance of walls and floors;
- extension of sound insulation requirements for services to cover water supply pipes, duct work and storm water pipes.
- The ABCB have produced an Acoustic Guideline to assist understanding the new provisions and to provide guidance on construction and installation issues.

Additionally, the relationship of the performance requirements to the development of alternative solutions has been clarified.



Full details of BCA changes are available on the HIA website (www.buildingonline.com.au) under "What's New"

Background information on the new provisions may be obtained from Alan Stilwell or Ray Loveridge on (02) 8878 0400