



Building Newsflash

Amendment of the Building Code of Australia (BCA) – BCA 2004

Purpose

The purpose of this Newsflash is to provide advice on recent amendments to the BCA.

Background

BCA 2004 commenced in Queensland on 1 May 2004. Previous amendments to the BCA occurred every six months in a replacement page format. Future amendments to the BCA will only occur every 12 months and will be incorporated in a complete new edition published every year in a book format. The next edition of the BCA will be available for adoption by States and Territories on 1 May 2005.

Legislative Provisions

Volume 1

Changes to Volume 1 include:

Removing State variations to the BCA

Queensland has been progressively consolidating construction requirements of other State Government agencies into the BCA Queensland Appendix. These include requirements covering workplaces, workplaces involving spray painting, detention centres, private health facilities and retail meat premises.

These requirements have been deleted from the BCA and incorporated into the Queensland Development Code. A copy of the provisions can be found at Building Codes Queensland's web site at www.dlgp.qld.gov.au under "publications".

Sound Insulation

Part F5 of BCA 2004 includes new sound insulation requirements between dwellings in Class 2, 3, and 4 buildings (Volume One) and Class 1 buildings (Volume Two) to accommodate impact and airborne sound. **These new requirements do not apply in Queensland** because there is insufficient demonstrated need to justify the increased costs associated with the new requirements.

The Queensland requirements for sound insulation are unchanged and are located in the Queensland Appendix.

Maintenance of Equipment and Safety Installations

BCA 2004 amends Part I by listing the safety measures that need to be maintained such as sprinklers, hydrants, hose reels and emergency warning systems.

Part I of the BCA previously required all safety installations in buildings to be adequately maintained. However, the BCA was silent on what constitutes a safety installation and how they must perform. The exception was in relation to mechanical ventilation and hot, warm and cooling water systems where specific standards were previously adopted to control Legionnaires' disease.

Other changes

Other changes to Volume One as a result of BCA 2004 include-

- The amendment of F1.5 by including reference to the 2004 edition of AS 3740, which contains additional requirements including new waterproofing requirements for wet areas with a timber floor.
- Minor changes to the list of referenced documents to incorporate a number of amendments and revisions.
- A new section which requires performance provisions from all relevant parts of the BCA to be addressed in an alternative solution.
- A new BP1.3 to address glass installations that may be subjected to human impact.
- A minor change to requirements for emergency lifts to allow AS 1735.1 as an alternative to AS 1735.2.
- The amendment of C2.12(b)(iii) by removing the need to separate lift motors from the remainder of the building if there is no machine room.

Volume 2

Changes to Volume 2 include-

- In section 3.12.4.1, allowing, in Climate Zones 3 and 4, a permanently fixed evaporative cooler in lieu of ceiling fans in order to obtain a ventilation concession under the energy efficiency provisions.
- In section 3.8.1, the provisions for waterproofing of wet areas have been deleted and replaced with reference to the new version of AS 3740 as the acceptable construction manual. AS3740 contains additional requirements applicable to waterproofing of wet areas with a timber floor.
- In section 3.3.4.3, recognising weepholes in external walls are not required where external masonry is weatherproofed, all window joints are sealed, and the damp-proof course extends across the entire width of the masonry leaves.
- In 3.3.4.6(c), prohibiting lead gutters, downpipes and flashings on any roof if the roof is used to collect potable water.
- Revising the R-values of reflective foil in accordance with latest data.

Further information

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