

# Footing stage inspections

Changes have been made to the *Building Regulation 2006* relating to inspection of stages for single detached class 1a buildings.

In summary, the changes:

- allow a building certifier to rely on competent persons to help inspect all aspects of the footing stage for single detached class 1a buildings, and
- include a requirement for competent persons for particular aspects to have specific qualifications.

## When did the changes come into effect?

The changes to the *Building Regulation 2006* relating to inspecting the stages for single detached class 1a buildings started on 9 December 2011.

## What is a 'stage'?

Generally, a stage is the point at which section 24 of the *Building Regulation 2006* and the building development approval for a class 1a house and class 10 building or structure require the work to be inspected to ensure it complies with the relevant building standards.

## What are the mandatory stages for the construction of a house?

The mandatory stages are described in the *Building Regulation 2006* as follows:

- (a) after excavation of foundation material and before the footings for the building are laid; (commonly referred to as the footing stage)
- (b) if the building is to have a slab—after the placement of formwork and steel for the slab, but before the concrete for the slab is poured (commonly referred to as the slab stage)
- (c) to the extent the bracing for the frame of the building consists of cladding or lining—after the cladding or lining has been fixed to the frame
- (d) to the extent the bracing for the frame of the building does not consist of cladding or lining—before the cladding or lining is fixed to the frame
- (e) if reinforced masonry construction is used for the frame of the building—before the wall cavities are filled; (c), (d) and (e) are commonly referred to as the frame stage)
- (f) at the completion of all aspects of the work (commonly referred to as the final stage).

## What is an aspect of a stage?

An aspect of a stage is the part of building work set out and described in *Guidelines for inspection of class 1 and 10 buildings and structures*. Some aspects in the guidelines may not be relevant to the building work being carried out on a site. For example, the aspect of the final stage relating to safe movement and access would generally not apply to lowset houses. In these cases, the aspect does not apply to the building work and therefore does not need to be considered as part of the final inspection.

## Does a cadastral surveyor have to set out the location of a house?

No. Changes to the *Building Regulation 2006* only require a cadastral surveyor to verify the boundary clearances of a house if a building certifier decides to rely on a competent person to give them inspection help for this aspect.

## Can competent persons inspect all aspects of the footing stage?

Yes. A building certifier can accept inspection help for all aspects of the footing stage. However, for the aspects relating to boundary clearances and reinforcing steel in the footing system, the competent persons must be a cadastral surveyor and registered professional engineer. A building certifier is still required to sign the inspection certificate for the footing stage, even though they may have relied on competent persons for all aspects.

## Can competent persons inspect all aspects of the final stage?

No. The changes to the *Building Regulation 2006* clarify that a building certifier must attend the site to carry out an inspection for the final stage. A building certifier can rely on competent persons to inspect some, but not all, of the aspects of the final stage.

## What certificates need to be provided to a building certifier to confirm the stage is complete?

For a building certifier to confirm a stage is complete, competent persons must provide certificates of inspection for the work they have helped to inspect. If a building certifier chooses to rely on a certificate from a competent person, it must be in the approved *Form 16—inspection certificate*, which is available on the Department of Housing and Public Works website. To certify the stage, a building certifier must receive certificates for all of the relevant aspects that make up the stage.

## Who is a competent person?

A competent person is an individual who a building certifier has decided is competent to help with the inspection of an aspect within a stage of building work. Part 5 of the *Building Regulation 2006* outlines the requirements for determining competency.

## Who is a cadet?

A cadet is a person who is appointed to assist a building certifier to perform building certifying functions. Generally, a cadet is employed by a local government or private certifier and is undertaking a course of study that would enable them to become accredited as a building certifier. Cadets are not licensed and can only assist building certifiers to carry out assessment and inspection of building work under supervision.

## Can a cadet be considered to be a competent person?

Cadets employed by a local government or private certifier cannot be used as a competent person by these employers. However, nothing prevents a cadet employed by one organisation being used as a competent person by a building certifier from another organisation, providing they meet the requirements outlined in the *Building Regulation 2006*.

## What is a certificate of inspection?

A certificate of inspection is a certificate (i.e. a Form 16) given by a building certifier to a builder confirming a stage of construction has been satisfactorily completed. The certificate must be signed by a building certifier.

## What happens if a person was decided as being a competent person to help inspect the boundary clearance aspect of the footing stage before the changes to the *Building Regulation 2006* started?

A person decided by a building certifier to be competent to give inspection help for the boundary clearance aspect of the footing stage before 8 December 2011 can give a certificate for that aspect even if they are not a cadastral surveyor. However, a competent person under this circumstance can only give a certificate for the aspect up until 1 February 2012. After this date a building certifier cannot accept a certificate from a competent person for this aspect unless the person is a cadastral surveyor.

## If a competent person is used to inspect boundary clearances for a large rural or acreage block, do they have to be a cadastral surveyor?

Yes. If a competent person is relied upon to give inspection help for the boundary clearance aspect on a rural block of land, they must be a cadastral surveyor.

## For more information

For more information, refer to the Department of Housing and Public Works website [www.hpw.qld.gov.au/construction](http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/construction).