



# Building Newsflash

## FIRE SAFETY STANDARD FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL CARE BUILDINGS

### Purpose

The purpose of this newsflash is to advise Part 14.1 Fire Safety in Residential Care Buildings of the Queensland Development Code has been adopted as a mandatory code under the *Building Act 1975* from 1 June 2007.

### Background

Newsflash 235 advised of proposed changes to fire safety requirements for new buildings intended for the provision of residential care. In addition, Newsflash 242 advised of publication of a draft standard on the Building Codes Queensland website and sought public comment.

Part 14.1 provides building designers in Queensland with certainty with respect to appropriate design choices where buildings are intended to be used as a place of residence for persons who require physical assistance in conducting their daily activities and to evacuate the building during an emergency.

In addition, Building Codes Queensland has submitted a proposal for change to the Australian Building Codes Board to adopt “residential care buildings” as a classification in lieu of “aged care buildings” in Volume 1, A3.2 of the Building Code of Australia.

### Summary of standard

Part 14.1 mirrors the current Victorian variation to the BCA by requiring sprinkler protection in accommodation buildings used to provide residential care. Interconnected smoke alarms and the maintenance of a minimum evacuation support ratio have also been included in Part 14.1.

Residential care buildings require:

- Sprinkler protection for all buildings, with a data communication link to the fire service in larger buildings;
- A fire and evacuation plan which specifies a minimum evacuation support ratio; and
- Where an AS1670.1 fire detection and alarm system is not installed, smoke alarms are interconnected to form a building wide alarm.

Concessions are available for some aspects of fire resistance and fire hose reels.

A copy of Part 14.1 is available on the Building Codes website at:

[http://www.lgp.qld.gov.au/docs/building\\_codes/queensland\\_development\\_code/referencedInLeg/QDC\\_Part14-1.pdf](http://www.lgp.qld.gov.au/docs/building_codes/queensland_development_code/referencedInLeg/QDC_Part14-1.pdf)

### Legislation

*Building Act 1975, s13(1) and schedule 1*

*Building Regulation 2006*

*Queensland Development Code, Part 14.1 – Fire Safety in Residential Care Buildings*

**Residential care building** means a *building* which is a place of residence where 10% or more of persons who reside there need *physical assistance* in conducting their daily activities and to evacuate the *building* during an emergency (including any *aged care building*) but does not include:

(a) a *hospital*; or

(b) a dwelling in which 2 or more members of the same family and not more than 2 other persons would ordinarily be resident; or

(c) a place of residence where only one resident needs *physical assistance* to conduct their daily activities and to evacuate the *building* during an emergency.

*Integrated Planning Regulation 1998 and Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990*

Schedule 2, table 1, items 1 and 2 sets out the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) referral advice jurisdiction.

*Interpretation*

The QFRS are an advice referral agency for new developments under Part 14.1 concerning ‘evacuation support’ (items P2 and A2). In particular, QFRS will provide advice regarding whether the building’s fire and evacuation plan complies with s104E of the *Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990*.

## **Contact**

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