



# Building newsflash

## Queensland Development Code (QDC) Mandatory Part (MP) 4.1—Sustainable buildings: Guidelines and fact sheet on air-conditioner requirements

### Purpose

To advise that guidelines for the QDC MP 4.1—Sustainable buildings and a fact sheet for the air-conditioner requirements are available for viewing on the department's [website](#).

### Background

The QDC provisions for 5-star housing (including credits for outdoor living areas), increased energy efficient lighting and increased water conservation commenced on 1 March 2009.

### Guideline for QDC MP 4.1—Sustainable buildings

To assist with compliance with the QDC, the department has published a [guideline](#) which provides detailed information on:

- requirements for 5-star energy equivalence for new class 1 buildings, and alterations or additions to existing class 1 buildings
- optional credits available for covered outdoor living areas, such as decks and verandahs, in class 1 buildings
- how the 5-star energy equivalence requirement applies to alterations, additions or re-location of existing class 1 buildings
- energy efficient lighting requirements for new class 1 and 2 buildings, as well as alterations and additions to existing dwellings
- requirements for water conservation for new class 1 and 2 buildings, and alterations or additions to existing dwellings.

### Guideline for peer review

For class 1 buildings, compliance with the 5-star energy equivalence rating requirement can be achieved through a number of compliance methods. The deemed-to-satisfy provisions of the Building Code of Australia (BCA) (Volume two, Part 3.12) and second generation software (BERS Pro, Accurate or FirstRate5) are the most commonly used methods. To allow consideration of more innovative building designs that may not readily comply with these assessment methods, a peer review process has been developed to facilitate the use of expert judgement (an approved alternative compliance method under the BCA).

The [guideline](#) provides applicants with an outline of the peer review process. Applications submitted through the peer review process will be conducted by a recognised expert in building design and energy efficiency.

### Air-conditioner fact sheet

From 1 July 2009, new or replacement air-conditioners installed (via plug or hard wired) in class 1 and 2 buildings in Queensland must have a minimum tested average energy efficiency ratio (EER) of 2.9 under the QDC. The tested average EER is an industry recognised measure for gauging the energy efficiency level for cooling of a system. An EER of 2.9 is generally equivalent to 4-stars on the current energy rating label. If a system is not labelled with the EER or star rating, the tested average EER for all models currently registered in Australia can be found at [www.energyrating.gov.au](http://www.energyrating.gov.au)



The new requirement will apply to both single phase (i.e. 240 volt systems most commonly used in homes to operate appliances and small motors) air-conditioners and three-phase (i.e. 400 volt systems typically used to efficiently run larger electric motors and appliances) air-conditioners up to 65 kW in output capacity which are required to have a tested EER under the Australian Standard 3823.2. This includes split systems, ducted systems and window units. Systems that are not required to have a tested EER under the Australian Standard will not be affected. This includes evaporative air-conditioners, portable coolers, and systems that are installed in commercial or public buildings.

Air-conditioning systems that had their EER values tested using an older Australian Standard (such as the 2001 or 2003 version) would still comply with the QDC requirements, provided the EER is at least 2.9. For example, a system that was first manufactured in 2004 and was tested under the old 2003 version of the Australian Standard to have an EER of 2.93 will be able to continue to be installed in Queensland homes after 1 July 2009. To assist with compliance, this policy will be included in the Queensland Development Code 4.1—Sustainable buildings guideline which will be made under the *Building Act 1975*.

For further information concerning the new air-conditioner requirements, refer to the [air-conditioner fact sheet](#).

### Legislation

The guidelines are made under Section 258 of the *Building Act 1975* to aid in compliance with the Act.

### Contact for further information

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