Building Newsflash

Proposed Amendments to the Queensland Development Code
Part 14-Fire Safety in Budget Accommodation Buildings
proposed amendments.

Purpose
The purpose of this Newsflash is to advise of a proposed minor amendment to the Queensland Development Code (QDC) – Part 14 Fire Safety in Budget Accommodation Buildings to define ‘self closing doors’.

Background
Following concerns raised by stakeholders regarding mandatory use of self closing doors in supported accommodation buildings, amendments were made to the QDC in September 2005 providing a range of new compliance options. The new options, without self closing doors, include increased levels of evacuation support, sprinklers and interconnected smoke alarms, or alternative solutions.

Self closing doors may still be used to comply under Part 14 if a provider chooses not to use the abovementioned compliance options. Although supported budget accommodation providers endorsed the new compliance options a number of service providers still have concerns about the use of self closing door mechanisms and the adverse effects these mechanisms have on the residents’ quality of life.

Legislation
Building Act 1975
Building Regulation 2006

Proposed amendments
To assist in complying with the QDC Part 14 Performance Criteria 4 – Travel Distance, bedroom doors may be fitted with self closing mechanisms. Building Codes Queensland proposes to amend Schedule 3 of the QDC Part 14 and define self closing doors to mean doors which are fitted with a device –

(a) with an automatic-closing operation initiated by the activation of the building's interconnected smoke alarms or smoke detection system; or
b) with a free-arm action closing operation which closes the door or causes the
door to remain closed (without preventing manual re-opening), upon the detection
of smoke by the building’s interconnected smoke alarms or smoke detection
system; or

(c) that returns the door to the fully closed position immediately after each
opening.

The proposed amendments are scheduled to be effective by the 30 of November
2007. A draft copy of the QDC Part 14 - Fire Safety in Budget Accommodation
Buildings is available on the Building Codes website at:
gdc-part14.0.pdf

Contact for further information

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