

Building newsflash

Reminder that the low-high-low cyclonic test method transition period will expire 1 May 2009

Advice on removal and review of Qld BCA variations

Purpose

To:

- remind stakeholders that the transitional period for the introduction of the new low-high-low (LHL) test method will expire on 1 May 2009. The LHL test method applies to metal roof assemblies, their connections and immediate supporting members in cyclonic areas
- advise that it is proposed to remove the Queensland variations in the Building Code of Australia (BCA) for sound insulation and windows in cyclonic areas in BCA 2009
- advise that the Queensland BCA variations for energy efficiency and swimming pool access are currently being reviewed and that further advice will be provided in due course.

Background

LHL test method

On 2 May 2008, newsflash 315 alerted stakeholders that the BCA had been amended to incorporate the new LHL test method. This meant that from 1 May 2008, it would have been mandatory for the LHL test method to be used for all metal roof cladding, its connections and immediate supporting members used in cyclonic areas.

Following building industry advice that manufacturers would not be able to have their products tested under the new system before the 2008 deadline, the *Building Regulation 2006* was amended extending the transitional period for the new LHL test method until 1 May 2009.

Variation reduction

Queensland has been progressively removing its BCA variations, in line with objectives agreed nationally through the Australian Building Codes Board.

Issues

LHL test method

Stakeholders are reminded the LHL test method will be the only test permitted under the deemed-to-satisfy provisions of the BCA after 1 May 2009.

Variation reduction

Following consultation with stakeholders, the following two Queensland variations will be removed in BCA 2009, which commences on 1 May 2009:

- sound transmission and insulation (BCA Volume 1 and Volume 2)
- windows in cyclonic areas (BCA Volume 2).

Consideration is also being given to the removal of Queensland's energy efficiency variation in BCA Volume 2 and to the transfer of Queensland's pool fencing requirements to the BCA, which will include referencing the 2007 edition of the pool fencing standard AS 1926. Further advice will be given on these two matters in due course.

Legislation

- *Building Act 1975:*
 - Section 13—What is the QDC?
 - Section 30—Relevant laws and other documents for assessment of building work.
 - Section 35—Relationship between the BCA and the QDC.
 - Section 37—Provision for changes to building assessment provisions.
- *Building Regulation 2006:*
 - Section 51BB—Approval of amendment of QDC by adding Part MP5.9.
 - MP 5.9—Buildings and structures in cyclonic areas.

Interpretation

For more information on the transition period for LHL cyclonic testing, refer to newsflash 315. In particular, stakeholders should note that the LHL test method will be the only test permitted under the deemed-to-satisfy provisions of the BCA after 1 May 2009.

Section 37 of the *Building Act 1975* allows earlier building assessment provisions to be used in limited circumstances if changes to the building assessment provision may cause financial hardship.

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