

Ministerial Construction Council

Terms of Reference

Subcommittee – Fire Protection Licensing and Compliance

May 2019

RTI Release

Release



Queensland
Government

Document history

Version	Date	Status	Key changes made	Authors	Reviewers
1.0	27/02/2019	Draft first version		Wayne Craven	
1.1	27/03/2019	Draft	Changes to scope and engagement	Justin Reis	Cathy McCahon
1.2	03/05/19	Draft	Changes to reflect Minister's Office advice	Nancy Alexander	Justin Reis, Cathy McCahon
1.3	09/05/19	Draft	Update membership and Chair	Nancy Alexander	Justin Reis, Cathy McCahon
1.4	20/05/19	Final	Updated membership – Master Electricians	Nancy Alexander	Justin Reis, Cathy McCahon

Table of Contents

Introduction and Purpose	3
Scope	3
Timeframe	4
Composition of the fire protection subcommittee	4
Chair	4
Stakeholder engagement	4
Secretariat	5
Frequency of meetings	5
Departmental contacts	5

Introduction and Purpose

Providing high quality fire protection standards is crucial to ensuring the life safety of occupants within buildings. This is achieved through best practice building and construction standards, a rigorous and fit for purpose licensing framework and adequate compliance and enforcement standards.

For several years, industry has expressed a need to review the present fire protection licensing framework to ensure it remains fit for purpose. This framework has been in place for many years and provides the contractor and occupational licence requirements for the fire protection sector.

Since late 2015, the Department of Housing and Public Works (DHPW) has been consulting with a Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) industry group, the Fire Protection Working Group (FPWG). The FPWG consisted of representatives from the fire protection, building, plumbing and insurance sectors.

In late 2016, the FPWG endorsed a new proposed licensing framework for fire protection work in Queensland. In 2016-17, DHPW consulted on the proposed new fire protection licensing framework as part of the Queensland Building Plan (QBP) discussion paper. The QBP has committed the Government to investigating the rationalisation of the fire protection licensing framework.

While the FPWG agreed on most of the technical qualifications that would underpin the framework, agreement was not reached on all of the technical qualifications and units of competency that relate to the proposed licence classes.

Additionally, industry has expressed concern regarding the existing compliance framework to ensure that fire protection systems and standards in buildings are maintained. This includes the enforcement of critical and non-critical fire defects in buildings and the ongoing maintenance of fire protection systems

Scope

To provide advice and make recommendations to the MCC:

- on a modernised fire protection licensing framework in line with the Government's Queensland Building Plan commitment
- on the appropriate technical qualifications and units of competency that should apply to the licences in the rationalised framework
- strengthening the compliance approach to ensure building owners and occupiers and the fire protection sector are operating effectively and in accordance with prescribed standards.

Deliverables include:

- a fire protection licensing framework which includes proposed classes of licence, scopes of work, key definitions and technical qualifications
- a strong and effective clear compliance framework for fire protection including processes to improve enforcement
- delivery of advice to the MCC and DHPW to facilitate regulatory amendment to implement the changes by 30 November 2019.

In addressing the scope of the fire protection subcommittee, the subcommittee should have regard to the following objectives when providing their advice and recommendations:

- simplify licence classes by removing duplication and redundant licence types
- modernise the licensing framework to reflect current industry practice
- increase mobility and employability across jurisdictions by removing unnecessary licensing requirements
- reduce costs for both industry and householders while maintaining high standards of competency within the building and construction industry
- maintain or enhance the current standard of technical qualifications for licence classes
- consider potential adverse impacts for the broader fire protection sector, other licences and the building and construction industry and the community
- ensure an effective compliance framework is in place to maintain or enhance fire protection standards in Queensland
- minimise additional regulatory burden on industry and building owners and occupiers
- minimise additional cost on responsible agencies such as the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and QBCC.

Timeframe

It is intended for the Minister to progress an Amendment Regulation to implement the proposed new fire protection licensing framework by the end November 2019. To facilitate this outcome, the subcommittee is asked to provide its recommendations and deliverables to the MCC to facilitate regulatory changes being made in 2019.

Composition of the fire protection subcommittee

The fire protection subcommittee will include the following representatives:

- Australian Institute of Building Surveyors
- Master Builders Association Queensland
- Master Plumbers Association Qld
- National Fire Industry Association Qld
- Queensland Council of Unions
- Plumbers' Union Queensland
- Air Conditioning and Mechanical Contractors' Association
- Association of Wall and Ceiling Industries Queensland
- Housing Industry Association
- Engineers Australia
- Master Electricians Australia

Ex officio members:

- DHPW
- QBCC
- Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

Chair

47(3)(b) National Fire Industry Association Qld

Stakeholder engagement

From time to time, the fire protection subcommittee may invite expert guests to attend fire protection subcommittee meetings to provide additional industry perspectives, information and technical guidance.

Secretariat

DHPW will provide support for the fire protection subcommittee as required, including:

- sending invitations and booking meeting rooms
- circulation of minutes and other information for members
- providing technical support and policy advice

Frequency of meetings

Meetings will be scheduled by the Chair.

Departmental contacts

Name	Contact details
Ms Catherine McCahon	A/Executive Director, Building Legislation and Policy t: 3008 2559 m: 47(3)(b) e: catherine.mccahon@hpw.qld.gov.au
Mr Justin Reis	A/Director, Strategic Policy (QBCO), BIP t: 3008 2538 m: 47(3)(b) e: justin.reis@hpw.qld.gov.au