

Household Resilience Program

Over-batten system

The Household Resilience Program aims to assist eligible home owners in parts of central and northern Queensland to improve the resilience of their homes against cyclones.

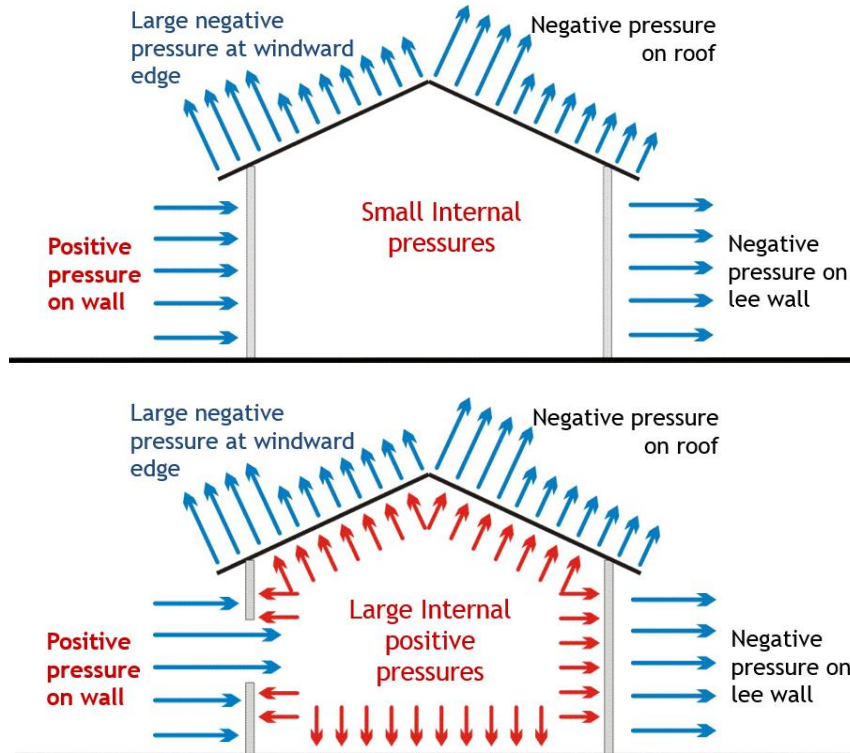
Houses built before the early-1980s in Queensland may not be built to cyclone building standards and therefore may not have appropriate connections to resist cyclonic winds.

Activities like upgrading (retrofitting) the roof structure, protecting the windows and strengthening the doors, and ensuring the house is well maintained are all ways to improve the strength of our homes.

Wind loads

The severe winds from tropical cyclones exert huge forces on houses with wind pushing on the windward wall and applying high suction pressures on the roof (trying to lift the house out of the ground).

In addition to these severe loads on the outside of the house, if a sudden opening occurs, for example, a broken window or failed door the windward wall pressure can suddenly enter the house and potentially double the load on the roof structure. Evidence suggests that this is a key failure in older homes.



Source: James Cook University – Cyclone Testing Station

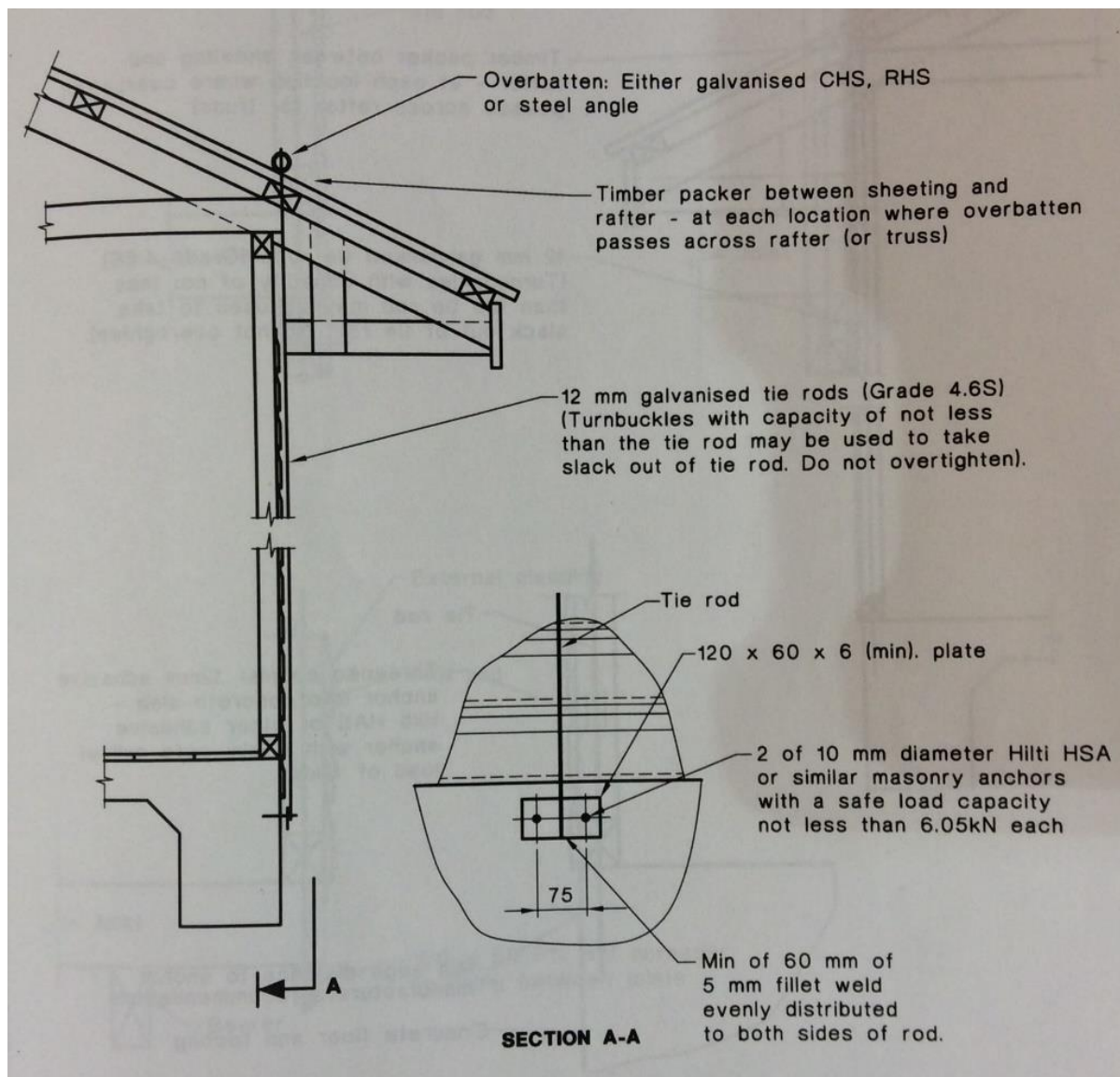
To resist these wildly fluctuating loads, our homes need strong and well-connected load paths from roof to ground. To achieve this, uplift is prevented by tying the house down to its foundations or concrete floor by a strong and well-connected path that the load can travel along.

Upgrading a pre-early-1980s house

Homes built before the current building code came into effect, were generally nailed together. The new building code has upgraded these tie-down for weak points of the structure by a combination of steel strapping, mechanical fixings and steel tie-down systems.

The preferred method in upgrading a home would be the full roof replacement and upgrade to the roof structure tie down. If this is not within the home owner's capacity, retrofitting the external over-batten system could be a short-term option.

Below is an image of the details for the external over-batten system in line with HB 132.2:1999 Structural upgrading of older houses, Part 2: Cyclone areas.



Work eligibility

To be eligible, the works must meet the following requirements:

- The over-batten system must be certified by a Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) licensed building surveyor, and a Form 21 provided on completion of the work, that it complies with HB 132.2:1999 Structural upgrading of older houses, Part 2: Cyclone areas.
- Ridge must be reinforced in addition to the external over-batten system.
- Evidence of QBCC Home Warranty Insurance provided on completion.

House restumping is not included in this program.

Contractor quotes

When sourcing a quote from a contractor, it must contain:

- the contractor's Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) licence number
- a reference that:
 - the products comply with Australian Standards
 - certification for the works by a QBCC licensed building surveyor will be provided.
- a full breakdown of any additional items and/or multiple improvement options such as:
 - scope of over-batten works
 - roof ridge reinforcement
 - certification
 - QBCC Home Warranty Insurance
 - any additional information that would assist the quote assessment.

If these requirements are not provided, the quote review process will be delayed and will require clarification from the contractor.

Approvals

Upon the approval of your application, you will be notified by email. You will then need to enter into a contract for the works in line with the approved quote. Contractors cannot be changed once the grant has been approved.

While works are underway, you and the contractor are responsible for the coordination of all works including site safety, protection of property and temporary accommodation as required.

Grant funds, cannot be paid as progress payments, and will only be paid as a lump sum on acceptable completion of the works.

Completion of the improvement works

On completion of the external over-batten tie-down upgrade, you will need to provide the following documentation to the Household Resilience Program grants team:

- Form 21 from a licensed QBCC building surveyor stating the works have been engineered and constructed to meet the Building Code of Australia (BCA)

- A copy of the:
 - QBCC Home Warranty Insurance taken out by the contractor prior to the work commencing
 - invoice, addressed to the home owner, referencing the Household Resilience Program application number.

Payment of grant

Once the evidence of completion is provided, a government assessor will inspect the works to assess if the grant funds can be released. This is expected to take place within 5-10 business days of the program team receiving this evidence.

On successful inspection, the grant funds will be approved for processing directly into the contractors account.

Additional benefits

Undertaking tie-down upgrades, program participants have found the following additional benefits:

- improvement in cyclone resilience
- support to local businesses and the building industry
- reduction in insurance premiums.

After the improvement works have been completed, you may qualify, at your insurer's discretion, for a reduction on your home insurance premium.

For more information relating to insurance premiums, speak to your preferred home insurer.

More information

Phone: 13 QGOV (13 7468)

Email: strongerhomes@hpw.qld.gov.au

Website: www.qld.gov.au/strongerhomes