



Temporary accommodation buildings and structures code

This fact sheet provides an overview of the Queensland Development Code (QDC) part MP 3.3–Temporary Accommodation Buildings and Structures (the code).

Summary

A 2007 field survey of temporary accommodation buildings found that inconsistent and sometimes low standards of temporary accommodation buildings were being provided, particularly in the mining regions of Queensland. Tragedies, such as the deaths during Cyclone George in Western Australia in 2007, also highlight the importance of suitable construction standards for temporary accommodation buildings.

The code was developed to provide a uniform and acceptable standard for all temporary accommodation buildings. The code requires temporary accommodation buildings to meet a range of minimum standards, including:

- the same structural wind loading requirements that apply to permanent buildings
- adequate fire safety standards, such as smoke alarms and emergency exits
- defined amenity standards such as minimum space per bed, power points, communication facilities and storage lockers, as well as a minimum number of facilities such as toilets, bathrooms, kitchens, laundries and refrigerators
- pest, dust and noise mitigation measures
- energy and water efficient fittings, as well as appropriate insulation.

The code applies to new temporary accommodation buildings and to existing lawful temporary accommodation buildings which are to be moved or relocated.

The code is a performance-based code, meaning that it sets mandatory objective style requirements (called performance criteria) that must be met. It also details a number of acceptable solutions that can be used to meet the performance criteria. Licensed building certifiers can approve alternatives to the acceptable solutions, if the alternative is equivalent to the acceptable solution or meets the performance criteria. However, only the local government can approve a temporary accommodation building remaining on site for more than two years.



What is a temporary accommodation building?

A temporary accommodation building is a building which contains a sleeping compartment and includes associated buildings such as dining rooms and communal laundries, which contain facilities required by the code. Temporary accommodation buildings can only remain on site for a maximum of two years, unless the local government approves a longer timeframe before the two-year period expires.

How is MP 3.3 applied to temporary accommodation buildings?

The code applies to all temporary accommodation buildings provided as part of an employment agreement or where rent is paid, such as those on mining sites. It also applies to temporary accommodation buildings for private and domestic residential use.

All temporary accommodation buildings must comply with the code (unless they are exempt development) and penalties of up to \$166 500 can apply for non-compliance. If the code is not being met, a person can complain to the relevant local government, who can investigate the matter and take any necessary enforcement action or prosecution.

Where temporary accommodation is provided as part of an employment agreement or where rent is paid, the code has a staged-application depending on the duration the temporary accommodation building remains on a site. For example, new temporary accommodation buildings on site for periods of 42 days or less need only meet a basic set of standards for structural adequacy, health, amenity and fire and life safety. For temporary accommodation buildings on a site for periods greater than 42 days, all requirements of the code apply, subject to some specific exclusions.

For temporary accommodation buildings used for private and domestic residential use, only specific parts of the code relating to timeframes and basic building code requirements apply.

Temporary accommodation building checklist

To assist occupants of temporary accommodation buildings in determining if the requirements of the code are being met, an approved checklist must be displayed on or near the temporary accommodation building if it is on site for more than 42 days and is provided as part of an employment agreement or where a rent is paid.

Existing lawful temporary accommodation buildings

The code does not apply to existing lawful temporary accommodation buildings which are not being moved or relocated. If an existing building is moved or relocated before 1 July 2012, only certain aspects of the code apply. For example, an existing lawful temporary accommodation building relocated to a site for 112 days or less, need only meet a basic set of standards for structural adequacy, health, amenity and fire and life safety. For periods longer than 112 days the same standards will apply, plus all requirements of the code relevant to the exterior of the building apply.



Do other parts of the QDC apply to temporary accommodation buildings?

The only other parts of the QDC that apply to temporary accommodation buildings are the design and siting standards in MP 1.1, MP 1.2 and MP 1.3, as well as specific criteria in other parts of the QDC. For example, the energy efficient lighting requirements of part MP 4.1 apply, but it is only those specific requirements and not all of MP 4.1.

The code does not apply where certain other legislative requirements address temporary accommodation standards, for example QDC part MP 5.6 for pastoral workers accommodation.

What energy efficiency standards apply to temporary accommodation buildings?

The 'building fabric' energy efficiency requirements of the national Building Code of Australia (including insulation) apply to the walls and roof of a temporary accommodation building. However, the energy efficiency requirements for floors do not apply to temporary accommodation buildings.

Further information

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Visit www.dip.qld.gov.au for more information on the QDC and a copy of the code and the approved temporary accommodation building checklist.

Visit www.legislation.qld.gov.au for a copy of the Building Regulation 2006 and the Sustainable Planning Regulation 2009.

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