



Building Newsflash

National Trial of *AccuRate* Software for Residential Building Approvals

Purpose

To advise local governments, building certifiers and other practitioners of the national regulatory trial of *AccuRate* software as a means of modelling the energy efficiency of house envelopes, under the Building Code of Australia (BCA).

Background

AccuRate is a new thermal modelling software that has been developed by the CSIRO under the direction of the Australian Greenhouse Office (AGO). It has been designed to better recognise the energy efficiency qualities of good house design and construction practice, particularly in tropical areas. It is intended that *AccuRate* will replace the current Nationwide Energy Rating Scheme software (NatHERS) and set new performance criteria for upgraded versions of *BERS* and *FirstRate*.

The AGO is facilitating a national trial of *AccuRate* thermal modelling software. The Association of Building Sustainability Assessors has been engaged to manage this trial.

The trial will involve a limited number of assessors submitting *AccuRate* thermal performance assessments under the BCA for regulatory approval in Cairns, Townsville and South East Queensland.

Building Code of Australia

There are four ways of complying with the BCA's housing energy efficiency measures.

The first method is meeting the deemed-to satisfy requirements of the BCA, which specify minimum levels of roof and wall insulation as well as ventilation, shading and glazing requirements.

The second method is based on achieving a star rating using thermal modelling software. Energy rating software used in the assessment of Class 1 and 10a buildings must comply with the Australian Building Codes Board's Protocol for House Energy Rating Software. Currently, *BERS* (v.3.2), *FirstRate* (v.3.5) and *NatHERS* (v.2.32) software comply with the Protocol.

The third method is based on achieving a building solution, which consumes the same or less energy than a reference building.

The fourth method relates to an alternative solution, which complies with the performance requirements of the BCA (see P2.6.1).

Building certification using *AccuRate*

AccuRate does not currently meet the ABCB Protocol. Therefore, until the ABCB Protocol is amended, *AccuRate* must be assessed by individual building certifiers under the performance requirements of the BCA.

A copy of the advice from the AGO is attached for your information.

Contact Officer

For further information in relation to the use of *AccuRate* in Queensland, please contact Malcolm Lehmhase on (07) 3237 1706 or email buildingcodes@dlgpsr.qld.gov.au.

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