

Summary of main changes for the 2014 National Construction Code

On 1 May 2014, the National Construction Code Volumes One, Two and Three will be adopted by the states and territories. A list of the main changes for each volume is listed below.

Changes affecting both Volumes One and Two (Building Code Australia)

- Slip-resistance requirements for ramps, landings and stair treads have been quantified as part of the Board's Quantification of Performance project.
- Heated water energy efficiency requirements have been removed from Volumes One and Two and consolidated into Volume Three (Plumbing Code Australia) to resolve inconsistencies and to locate the provisions in the appropriate NCC volume, as part of the Board's NCC Harmonisation project.
- Where more than one smoke alarm is installed in a Class 1 building or a sole-occupancy unit of a Class 2 or 3 building or Class 4 part, those alarms must be interconnected.
- The Performance Requirement for laundry facilities has been expanded to require facilities for the sanitary disposal of waste water.
- Various provisions, including those dealing with energy efficiency, have been clarified and improved as a result of feedback from BCA users.
- Referenced standards have been updated as follows:
 - AS/NZS 1170.2 Structural design actions, Wind actions - Amendment 3 referenced.
 - AS 1657 Fixed platforms, walkways, stairways and ladders, Design construction and installation - 2013 edition referenced.
 - AS1668.2 The use of mechanical ventilation and air-conditioning in buildings, Mechanical ventilation for acceptable indoor-air quality - 1991 edition removed following completion of a transition period to the 2012 edition.
 - AS 4586 Slip resistance classification of new pedestrian surface materials – 2013 edition referenced.

Changes affecting Volume One (BCA)

In addition to the changes listed above which affect Volumes One and Two, there are a number of changes specific to Volume One:

- The requirement to install fire hose reels in Class 2, 3 and Class 4 parts of buildings has been removed and replaced with enhanced portable fire extinguisher requirements as an outcome from the Board's Quantification of Performance project.
- The fire-resistance concession that permits the use of timber framed construction in certain Class 2 buildings has been expanded to include certain Class 3 buildings following industry research on the fire loads of Class 3 buildings.
- Provisions for photoluminescent exit signs have been introduced as an option to internally illuminated exit signs.
- Section I – Maintenance has been removed as agreed at the ABCB 2012-3 meeting, in recognition that maintenance is primarily a state and territory regulatory function.
- Referenced standards have been updated as follows:
 - AS1668.4 The use of mechanical ventilation and air-conditioning in buildings, Natural ventilation of buildings - 2012 edition referenced.
 - AS 2118.4 Automatic fire sprinkler systems, Sprinkler protection for accommodation buildings not exceeding four stories in height - 1995 edition removed following completion of a transition period to the 2012 edition.
 - AS 2118.6 Automatic fire sprinkler systems, Combined sprinkler and hydrant - 1995 edition removed following completion of a transition period to the 2012 edition.
 - AS 3600 Concrete structures - Amendment 3 referenced.
 - AS/NZS 3823.1.2 Performance of electrical appliances, Air-conditioned and air-to-air heat pumps, Testing and rating to performance – 2012 edition referenced.
 - ASTM E2073-10 Standard Test Method for Photopic Luminance of Photoluminescent (Phosphorescent) Markings – 2010 edition referenced.

Changes affecting Volume Two (BCA)

In addition to the changes listed above which affect Volumes One and Two, there are a number of changes specific to Volume Two:

- The definition of ‘design wind speed’ has been amended to clarify that non-cyclonic (N) and cyclonic (C) region wind classes are not equivalent because of inherent differing wind pressure coefficients.
- New Deemed-to-Satisfy Provisions for hardboard wall cladding have been inserted to compliment the current range of wall cladding options.
- Referenced standards have been updated as follows:
 - AS 1397 Steel sheet and strip, Hot dipped zinc-coated or aluminium/zinc-coated – 2001 edition has been removed following completion of a transition period to the 2011 edition.
 - AS/NZS 1859.4 Reconstituted wood-based panels, Specifications, Wet-processed fibreboard – 2004 edition referenced.
 - AS/NZS 2269.0 Plywood, Structural, Specifications – 2012 edition referenced.
 - AS 4055 Wind loads for housing – 2006 edition has been removed following completion of a transition period to the 2012 edition.

Changes affecting Volume Three (PCA)

- A new Part A4 has been included to define the building classifications for consistency with Volumes One and Two.
- New provisions have been added to Part B1 – Cold water services, setting out public policy transferred from AS/NZS 3500.1 in relation to cross-connection control and water efficiency.
- Heated water energy efficiency requirements have been consolidated into Volume Three (PCA) to resolve inconsistencies and to locate the provisions in the appropriate NCC volume, as part of the Board's NCC Harmonisation project.
- State and Territory appendices have been expanded to consolidate technical requirements affecting the design and installation of plumbing and drainage systems into the PCA.
- Referenced standards have been updated as follows:
 - AS 1056.1 Storage water heaters, General requirements - 1991 edition has been referenced.
 - AS1668.2 The use of mechanical ventilation and air-conditioning in buildings, Mechanical ventilation for acceptable indoor-air quality - 1991 edition removed following completion of a transition period to the 2012 edition.
 - AS 2118.4 Automatic fire sprinkler systems, Sprinkler protection for accommodation buildings not exceeding four stories in height - 1995 edition removed following completion of a transition period to the 2012 edition.
 - AS 2118.6 Automatic fire sprinkler systems, Combined sprinkler and hydrant - 1995 edition removed following completion of a transition period to the 2012 edition.
 - AS/NZS 4234 Heated water systems, Calculation of energy consumption – 2008 edition has been referenced.
 - AS 4552 Gas fired water heaters for hot water supply and/or central heating – 2005 edition has been referenced.
 - AS 5200.000: 2006 Procedures for the Certification and Authorisation of Plumbing products has been replaced with the ABCB Schedule of Specifications, as part of the transfer of WaterMark to the ABCB.
 - MP 78: 1999 Manual for Assessment of Risks of Plumbing Products has been replaced with the ABCB Manual for Assessment of Risks of Plumbing Products, as part of the transfer of WaterMark to the ABCB.