

DISCLAIMER

This Fact sheet provides an outline of National construction code as it exists both at Australian common law and in statute. This fact sheet is **not intended to be a substitute for professional legal advice** and no reliance should be placed on the information as if it were such. Please consult Guarna Legal should you have any questions regarding the National Construction Code

Introduction

The National Construction Code is the uniform collection of technical rules that apply to the design, construction and performance of new buildings (and new building work in existing buildings) in Australia. It is made up of the Building Code of Australia and the Plumbing Code of Australia, and is intended to be the “one-stop shop” for all trades and services in the construction industry. Quantifying many of the NCC Performance Requirements to provide more performance-based compliance options is a key feature of NCC 2019. You’ll see more Performance Requirements quantified with the introduction of 20 new Verification Methods (VMs).

- Vol 1.** requirements for multi-residential, commercial, industrial and public buildings and structures (read with the guide to volume 1).
- Vol 2.** requirements for residential and non-habitable buildings and structures.
- Vol 3.** requirements for plumbing and drainage for all classes of buildings.

Accessibility

- New VMs for access to and from a building and for ramps.
- Accessible adult change facilities (sanitary facilities with additional features to assist people with more profound or complex disabilities who are unable to independently use standard accessible facilities) are required in certain new or redeveloped public buildings such as shopping centres, museums, theatres, sporting venues and airports.

Safety

Fire safety requirements have been updated, including:

- A requirement to install fire sprinklers in apartment buildings and other residential buildings 4 storeys and above, and up to 25 metres in effective height.
- A new VM for construction in bushfire-prone areas.
- A new non-mandatory Fire Safety Verification Method (will be in force after 1 May 2020 to allow for training).
- Revised provisions regarding the requirements for occupiable outdoor areas such as occupiable roof-top spaces (ie rooftop bars and cinemas).

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- New and improved acceptable construction practices (ACPs), including new ACPs for masonry and attachment of decks and balconies and improved ACPs for roof and wall cladding and fire safety.

Sustainability

- New heating and cooling load limits for residential buildings using the NatHERS DTS compliance pathway.
- Commercial building energy efficiency requirements are significantly changed, including new VMs for NABERS and Green Star. This change is subject to a 1 year transition period from 1 May 2019, during which time, either the NCC 2016 or NCC 2019 requirements may be used.
- Greater energy efficiency requirements for both commercial and residential buildings (subject to a 12-month transition period for implementation).
- New and consolidated requirements for heated water temperature control, cross-connection control and rainwater harvesting and use.

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