WA Alterations & Additions Protocol for Energy Efficiency in Class 1 or attached Class 10 buildings

From 1 May 2015, the current transitional requirements set out in regulation 31B for energy efficiency provisions will cease. From this date, alterations and additions for buildings of all classifications will be required to comply with the applicable building standards set out in regulation 31A of the Building Regulations 2012.

The Building Commission has supported an industry-led project to provide a practical building solution to enable alterations and additions in Class 1 or attached Class 10 buildings to meet the more stringent energy efficiency requirements that will apply from 1 May 2015. This project has resulted in the development of a WA Alterations & Additions Protocol for Energy Efficiency.

What is the WA Alterations & Additions Protocol for Energy Efficiency?

The protocol formulates an alternative solution to comply with Performance Requirements P2.6.1 Building and P2.6.2 Services of Volume 2 of the Building Code of Australia. This provides the industry with another option to demonstrate compliance with the energy efficiency provisions.

The protocol is a building solution that makes reasonable allowance for performance of the existing building when an alteration or addition occurs. Nominated performances have been determined by research and investigation as making reasonable allowance for existing building performance when determining the “to degree necessary” outcome that applies for Performance Requirements P2.6.1 and P2.6.2.

The verification methods provided in the protocol allow building surveyors to certify compliance with the relevant performance requirements.

Structure of the protocol

The structure of the protocol is based on the requirements contained within BCA Part 3.12 Energy Efficiency. It consists of four main sections:

1. Preamble including the scope, application and defined terms of the protocol.

2. Part A – HERS option

This section of the protocol describes building rating outcomes, expressed as a maximum Total MJ target, that make reasonable allowance for the likely performance of the existing building so that a single building rating for the whole-of-house can be used.

3. Part B – Elemental Provisions (EP) option

This section of the protocol describes targets that can be applied for an EP assessment for part, or parts, of the building so that reasonable allowance is made for the likely performance of the existing building.

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4. Part C – Services option

This section of the protocol describes targets that can be applied for BCA Part 3.12.5 so that reasonable allowance is made for the likely performance of existing services.

Protocol resources

In addition to the protocol document itself, resources (such as spreadsheets) have been developed to assist with calculation of targets for the purpose of determining compliance with the protocol.

Using the protocol

The protocol has been designed to be used in conjunction with the BCA edition that applies to the proposed building work.

Where the protocol does not provide an alternative to a specific provision of BCA Part 3.12, compliance with that specific provision must be achieved. For example, B1.1 of the protocol provides an alternative solution to the values in BCA Table 3.12.1.1a when building work is undertaken on an existing roof. These alternative values make reasonable allowance for the performance of the existing roof.

However, the protocol does not provide an alternative to BCA provision 3.12.1.1 for building fabric thermal insulation. Therefore, compliance must still be achieved with provision 3.12.1.1 of the BCA edition that applies to the proposed building work.

The use of the protocol does not preclude the development of another alternative solution or the use of the deemed-to-satisfy provisions for alterations and additions to existing Class 1 and attached Class 10 buildings.

When the protocol cannot be used

The protocol cannot be applied to:

- New Class 1 buildings.
- Existing Class 1 and 10 buildings where no alteration and/or addition has taken place and approval was granted using the provisions of BCA 2012 or later.
- Existing Class 1 and 10 buildings where an alteration or addition has taken place and approval for the alteration and/or addition was granted using the provisions or BCA 2012 or later.
- New detached Class 10 buildings.
- Relocation of an existing Class 1 or 10 building (Regulation 31D of the Building Regulations 2012).
- Class 2 – 9 buildings.

The protocol cannot be used in conjunction with the BCA 2009 edition.

When will the protocol be available to use?

The protocol document is now available for use. It can be accessed via the Building Commission website. Resources to support the protocol are also available on the website.

As advised in Industry Bulletin 038, regulation 31B of the Building Regulations 2012 has

been amended to provide an additional 12-month transition period to give industry time to become familiar with the protocol.

Between 1 May 2014 and 30 April 2015, the applicable building standards for energy efficiency that can be applied to alterations and additions in existing Class 1 or Class 10 buildings are:

- BCA 2009 Part 2.6, or;
- BCA 2013 or 2014 Part 2.6. The WA Alterations & Additions Protocol for Energy Efficiency can be used as an alternative solution for demonstrating compliance with BCA Part 2.6.

From 1 May 2015, alterations and additions in existing Class 1 or Class 10 buildings will be required to comply with the applicable building standards set out in regulation 31A of the Building Regulations 2012. The WA Alterations & Additions Protocol for Energy Efficiency can be used as an alternative solution for demonstrating compliance with BCA Part 2.6.

Information for building surveyors and applicants

Regulation 16 (3) (c) of the Building Regulations 2012 states that details of an alternative solution to a building standard that is proposed to be used in the building work must accompany a building permit application. Where an applicant has used the protocol as an alternative solution, these details should include the following:

- The protocol reporting sheet (included as part of the resources available on the Building Commission website);
- The calculations used to determine the targets to be complied with under the protocol; and
- A copy of the version of the protocol used to determine compliance or, a statement of the version of the protocol used.

Building surveyors would need to review the above to ensure the building meets the Performance Requirements as outlined in the protocol before signing the certificate of design compliance.

During the transition period

The 12-month transition period has been implemented to provide industry time to become familiar with the protocol. The Building Commission welcomes feedback on its use in order to identify any issues and ensure the protocol is a robust, practical building solution for alterations and additions in Class 1 or Class 10 buildings. Please provide any feedback to the Building Commission via email to bcinfo@dmirs.wa.gov.au with a subject line of 'Alterations & Additions Protocol for Energy Efficiency'.

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Building Commission | Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety
Level 1, 303 Sevenoaks Street, Cannington WA 6107
P: Locked Bag 14, Cloisters Square WA 6850
T: 1300 489 099 | F: 08 6251 1501
E: BCinfo@dmirs.wa.gov.au
W: www.dmirs.wa.gov.au/building-commission

Building Commission