



AUSTRALIAN BUILDING CODES BOARD

Annual Business Plan 2012-13

The National Construction Code (NCC) was successfully introduced in 2011 and heralded the first step in a major COAG building regulatory reform. COAG's broader plan to incorporate all onsite regulatory building requirements is being progressed further in 2012-13 with consideration of the inclusion of gasfitting into the NCC.

Life safety matters remain a priority. The 2012-13 Business Plan provides detail on the work that the ABCB is undertaking to further improve the resilience of buildings to natural disasters including bushfires, cyclones, earthquakes and flood. The ABCB also continues to respond to Ministerial direction on matters relating to adaptation to potentially adverse societal risks associated with climate change and improving energy efficiency in buildings.

This year's Business Plan elaborates on the transition of the WaterMark plumbing product certification scheme from Standards Australia to the ABCB, and its subsequent review. A comprehensive review will also be undertaken of the ABCB's building product certification scheme, CodeMark.

Details on all projects being undertaken by the ABCB during 2012-13 are outlined in the Plan.



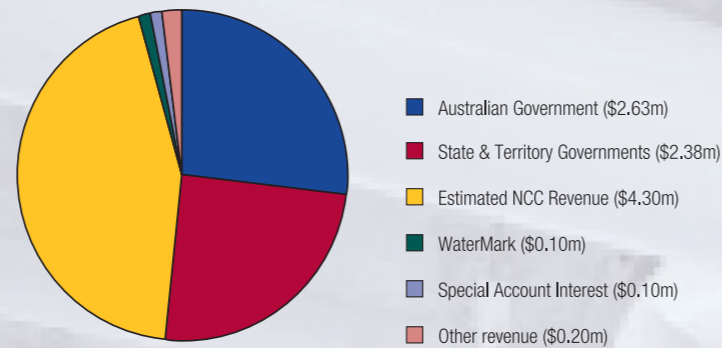
ABOUT THE ABCB

The ABCB is a joint initiative of all levels of government in Australia, together with the building industry. Its mission is to oversee issues relating to health, safety, amenity and sustainability in building.

The ABCB promotes efficiency in the design, construction and performance of buildings through the National Construction Code (NCC), and the development of effective regulatory and non-regulatory approaches.

The Board aims to establish effective and proportional codes, standards and regulatory systems that are consistent between States and Territories.

ABCB 2012-13 Sources of Revenue (\$9.70m)



FOCUS OF BUSINESS PLAN

The 2012-13 Business Plan (the Plan) reiterates the ABCB's core function – maintaining and updating the NCC, by exercising a gatekeeper role in response to calls for regulation. A relevant and contemporary building code, achieved through rigorous assessment of emerging issues and ongoing review of existing provisions, is a critical contributor to an efficient building and construction industry, a safer built environment and a strong national economy. Life safety remains the focus of the Plan.

Strengthened by the new Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA), which took effect on 30 April 2012, the ABCB will continue to deliver the NCC into the future.

The National Construction Code

In 2011, the Board over-sighted the implementation of this important initiative to incorporate plumbing and building within the one code as a first step in COAG's broader plan to consolidate all on-site regulatory building requirements. Stage two of this consolidation has involved scoping work for the inclusion of gasfitting in the NCC and this will be considered by Governments in 2012-13.

Plumbing Regulatory Reform

Following the creation of the NCC series, the Board continues to work on a number of plumbing regulatory reform initiatives including, improved harmonisation of building and plumbing requirements, a review of Plumbing Code of Australia (PCA) referenced documents, improved installation requirements to support the efficient performance of solar hot water panels, and research on the operation of waterless sanitary facilities.

National Strategy for Energy Efficiency

Improving the energy efficiency of Australia's building stock remains a priority and in the year ahead, the Board will continue to progress our role in the National Strategy on Energy Efficiency (NSEE). The National Building Energy Standard Setting, Assessment and Rating Framework (the Framework), was subject to public consultation in mid 2012, and COAG is expected to consider the Framework Policy Statement once finalised.

Implementation of the Framework will be subject to COAG Principles of Best Practice Regulation as required under the ABCB Intergovernmental Agreement.

Building Resilience to Natural Disasters

The Board will continue work toward further improving the regulatory regime affecting buildings, particularly in relation to resilience to natural disasters, including ensuring that the NCC continues to address adaptation to climate change.

In addition to reviewing the NCC requirements for building resilience to natural disasters, non-regulatory Handbooks on Community Bushfire Shelters and Building in Flood Prone Areas have been finalised. A RIS for construction of buildings in flood prone areas, and a Flood Standard, were provided for public consultation in preparation for incorporation of the Flood Standard in NCC 2013. Similarly, the ABCB is finalising consideration of a review of BCA requirements for buildings constructed in cyclone affected areas.

Plumbing Product Certification Scheme – WaterMark

The transition of the WaterMark Product Certification Scheme from Standards Australia to the ABCB, is expected to be completed in 2012, with a new website and call centre in place. A review of the Scheme, including policy objectives and Scheme rules, will be undertaken to ensure it operates in the best interests of the community, the plumbing and drainage industry and that it meets COAG Principles of Best Practice Regulation. The Terms of Reference for the review will be developed in consultation with the Commonwealth and the State and Territories.

Building Product Certification Scheme – CodeMark

The CodeMark Building Product Certification Scheme is jointly managed by the ABCB and New Zealand's Department of Building and Housing (DBH). The Scheme commenced in 2005 and was designed to encourage product innovation, while supporting a performance-based approach to building construction and design. The Scheme operates by organisations applying to CodeMark certification bodies, (themselves accredited by the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ)) to have their products evaluated and certified as complying with the BCA.

After 7 years operation, a full review of the CodeMark Scheme, including the Product Certification process and requirements for Certification of Accredited Bodies, is being undertaken. The ABCB, DBH and JAS-ANZ, as well as the States and Territories will be engaged in the review.

Awareness and Training Initiatives

The NCC Information Seminars continue to be well attended, attracting over 2000 delegates in 2012. To complement our face-to-face engagement with stakeholders, the ABCB intends to pilot on-line / e-Learning training courses. Additionally, the ABCB produces annual on-demand webcasts, to ensure a greater proportion of practitioners, including those who are regionally located, are kept informed of amendments to the NCC.

Following the recent release of the *Understanding the Disability Access Provisions* and *Understanding the Plumbing Code of Australia* Awareness training modules, the ABCB will be reviewing the other modules in order to improve their usability, visual impact and appeal for industry practitioners.

The ABCB's eighth National Conference will be held in Brisbane in September 2013, and will for the first time, be promoted to both the building and plumbing industries. The Conference will supported by the Master Plumbers' Association.

DELIVERY OF BOARD CORE CODE WRITING BUSINESS

A primary role of the ABCB is to maintain and update the NCC to ensure effective regulatory systems. Within this framework the ABCB must carefully manage the complex demands of issues that impact on life safety, health, amenity, disability access and sustainability.

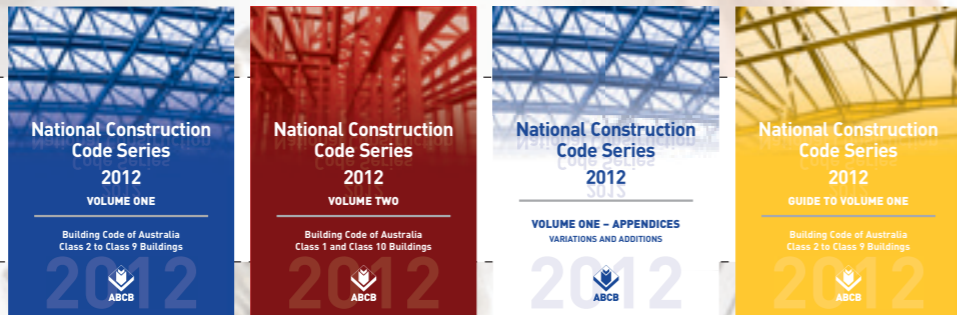
All potential changes to the NCC must be considered in accordance with COAG best practice regulatory principles and be subject to impact assessment.

The initial presumption for the ABCB is not to introduce new or increased regulation and instead, investigate means of achieving the desired result, including alternatives to regulation. If intervention is necessary, the NCC sets minimum acceptable regulatory requirements that are proportional to the issue being addressed.

2011-12 ACHIEVEMENTS	2012-13 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
Received Ministerial endorsement of ABCB Business Plan, by August 2011	Ministerial endorsement of ABCB Business Plan, by September 2012
Developed a five year strategic plan for the ABCB by December 2011	ABCB five year Strategic Plan endorsed by August 2012
Delivered NCC 2012 on budget and in line with COAG principles, by May 2012	NCC 2013 delivered on budget and in line with COAG principles, by May 2013
Reviewed the cyclone construction standards, as part of the improvement of the regulatory reform regime for buildings	Inclusion of gasfitting in NCC considered by governments by June 2013
Examined the feasibility of Performance Requirements and a national performance standard for community bushfire refuges	Continue to respond to Government direction on National Strategy for Energy Efficiency, including the Framework
Developed a construction standard on building in flood-prone areas and a non-mandatory Handbook to assist practitioners	Continue to respond to Government direction on Adaptation including natural disasters and climate change, and develop an associated Board position statement
Responded to Government direction on the National Strategy for Energy Efficiency	WaterMark transition to ABCB finalised and review of WaterMark Product Certification Scheme commenced
Further consolidated and harmonised NCC building and plumbing provisions, including scoping for gas fitting	Review of CodeMark Product Certification Scheme undertaken
Delivered further awareness and training materials on the Disability Access provisions and the Plumbing Code, via new Resource Kits and webcasts of relevant issues	Non-regulatory Handbooks on Use of Lifts in an Emergency, Building in Flood Prone Areas and Community Bushfire Shelters developed, Condensation in Buildings Handbook revised
Progressed the transition of WaterMark Product Certification Scheme from Standards Australia to ABCB	Awareness and training activities enhanced, NCC 2013 Information Seminars delivered in all capital cities by March 2013, and webcasts developed
Successfully delivered ABCB's Information Seminars and 2011 National Conference	Benefits of Building Regulatory Reform study completed

National Construction Code

Ongoing consolidation and harmonisation of all onsite building regulation



Ongoing maintenance and development



Product Certification Scheme Reviews



Further consolidation and harmonisation



Gasfitting – Government consideration for inclusion in NCC

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

To be scoped pending advice from Ministers

ELECTRICAL

July 2012

July 2013

July 2014

ABCB WORK PROGRAM 2012-13

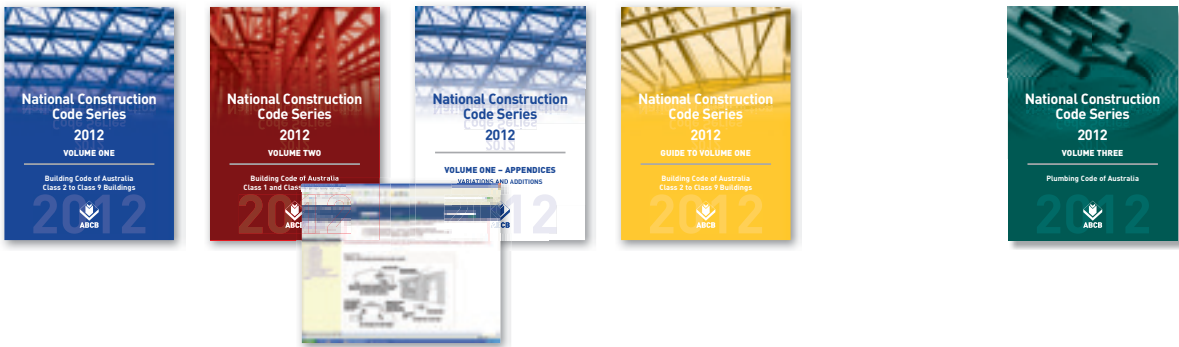
	PROJECT NAME	PROJECT OUTPUT
NCC (CODE) DEVELOPMENT	Maintain and Update the NCC (including Volume Two Review)	2013 edition of the National Construction Code (NCC) finalised for publication; Draft of NCC 2014 released for public comment; Report for Board consideration on options for the future development of Volume Two
	Standards Coordination and Committees	Documents, including Australian Standards, which are suitable for regulatory use and referencing in the NCC
	Emergency Egress for All Occupants	BCA Performance Requirements to enable the use of lifts for emergency egress in Alternative Solutions considered for inclusion in NCC 2013; Non-regulatory Handbook developed to assist designers to use lifts as a means of emergency egress using Alternative Solutions; A Directions Report identifying a strategy for further analysis and proposing egress measures for all occupants for future inclusion in the BCA
	Sustainability - Adaptation and Resilience (inc. Natural Disasters and Floods)	A policy statement outlining the principles used by ABCB to guide its approach to adaptation to climate change when considering proposals for change to the NCC; An assessment of the adequacy of the current earthquake provisions; An assessment of the adequacy of the current cyclonic wind provisions; ABCB Flood Standard considered for reference in the NCC; Natural disasters monitored to determine whether current NCC provisions are appropriate
	Sustainability - National Strategy for Energy Efficiency	Ongoing maintenance and technical support of the NCC energy efficiency provisions; Participation as an observer to the development of the National Strategy for Energy Efficiency (NSEE) "National Building Energy Standard-Setting, Assessment and Rating Framework" (Framework); ABCB Chairman Submission on the draft Energy Efficiency Framework
	AS/NZS 3500 Standards Review	Detailed proposals to Standards Australia to revise the AS/NZS 3500 series of standards
	Solar - Heated Hot Water Review	National requirements for the orientation and inclination for solar-heated hot water units to facilitate efficient performance, for consideration of inclusion in AS/NZS 3500.4 Section 6
	Sprinklers in Residential Care Facilities	An assessment of the benefits of installing automatic fire sprinkler systems in residential care facilities
	External Noise in Residential Buildings	BCA provisions and RIS developed for the attenuation of externally generated 'nuisance' noise within residential buildings
	Smoke Alarms in Residential Buildings	An assessment of the adequacy of the current smoke alarm provisions
	Access for People with a Disability	Respond to Government policy direction on disability access to buildings as it applies to the NCC
	Slip Resistance	BCA provisions developed to quantify the terms "slip-resistant" and "non-slip" and considered for inclusion in the BCA
	Slips, Trips and Falls - Balustrades and Window Barriers	Revised provisions for balustrades and window barriers included in NCC 2013
	Bushfires (inc. Shelters and further research)	Further evidence sought to inform the need for BCA requirements for certain non-residential buildings, such as aged care facilities, schools and hospitals, to be located in designated bushfire prone areas; Assist Standards Australia in reviewing methods of testing the performance of building materials and assemblies exposed to bushfire (AS 1530.8); Performance Requirements and a non-mandatory Handbook for community bushfire shelters developed; Participate on the ongoing review of AS 3959 'Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas' and addressed VBRC recommendations; Research undertaken to verify acceptance criteria for tenability in a private bushfire shelter; Negotiate with Standards Australia and SAI Global Ltd an arrangement for free online access to AS 3959-2009
	Class 1b Buildings	An assessment to determine whether the current NCC provisions for Class 1b buildings are suitable for occupants who need physical assistance to evacuate
	Consolidation of Lift Requirements	Building related lift provisions relocated from AS 1735 to the BCA
Quantification of BCA Requirements	Measurable BCA Performance Requirements and/or additional Verification Methods	
REGULATORY EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS	Impact Assessment Process on Regulatory Change Proposals	Advice to decision-makers on the impacts of regulatory proposals, following approval by the Office of Best Practice Regulation (OBPR); Effective regulation impact assessment processes in consultation with OBPR and in accordance with COAG regulatory principles
	Variation Management	A reduction in existing State/Territory variations in NCC 2013, and scrutiny of proposals for new variations in accordance with IGA principles
	Plumbing - Consolidation / Harmonisation (BCA / PCA overlap)	Clarification of areas of regulatory responsibility with regard to building/plumbing issues contained within both the BCA and PCA and consolidation of plumbing related issues into the NCC
	Evaluation of NCC Inclusion of Gasfitting	Report for Board and BMF consideration
	Temporary Structures	An evaluation of current State and Territory technical provisions for temporary structures used for public assembly, for potential development into provisions for national adoption
	Facilitation of National Consistency in Technical & Administrative Systems	Interaction with existing national forums and administrations to facilitate a nationally consistent approach to building regulations
CODE DELIVERY AND SUPPORT	Plumbing Product Certification Scheme - WaterMark	Transfer of administration of the Scheme from Standards Australia to the ABCB; Day to day operation of the Scheme, including an annual audit; Policy oversight and full review of the Scheme
	Building Product Certification Scheme - CodeMark	Management, facilitation and review of Australian/New Zealand third party product certification scheme
	NCC Advisory Service	NCC clarification/advice to subscribers
	NCC Awareness and Training	National information seminars and training materials to enhance awareness and understanding of the NCC among practitioners, the tertiary sector and community
	NCC Marketing and Promotion	Raised awareness of the NCC and other ABCB activities
	Non-Regulatory Handbooks	Development, publication or revision of non-mandatory Handbooks on matters not suitable for regulation
	National Conference	Delivery of an ABCB Conference supported by industry
	Benefits of Building Regulatory Reform Study	An economic impact assessment demonstrating the quantitative benefits of three regulatory reform measures: A single, nationally consistent Building Code of Australia; Performance-Based Building Code of Australia; and Consolidation of building and plumbing codes
ORGANISATIONAL ADMINISTRATION	ABCB Cadetship	Program offering ABCB employment experience for building professional students
	Research Scholarship	Research to inform decisions on future NCC and non-regulatory measures through relevant research bodies such as Universities, technical colleges, and the Australian Research Council

KEY denotes Building Code of Australia related projects denotes Plumbing Code of Australia related projects denotes broader NCC related projects

THE NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION CODE SERIES

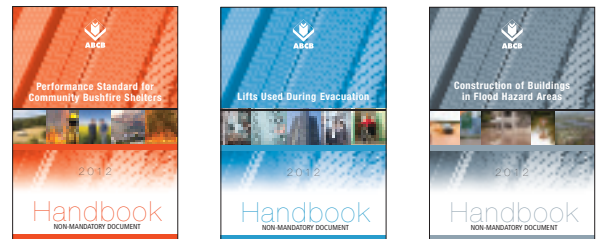
THE BUILDING CODE OF AUSTRALIA
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VOLUME **THREE**



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