



City of **HOBART**

**Memorandum:** Lord Mayor  
Deputy Lord Mayor  
Elected Members

## **Response to Question Without Notice**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS - MULTI-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS**

**Meeting:** City Planning Committee

**Meeting date:** 16 November  
2020

**Raised by:** Councillor Harvey

**Question:**

Can the Director advise what environmental standards apply to multi-residential developments. Is there a national or state standard for environmental performance?

**Response:**

The National Construction Code (NCC) specifies the standards for environmental performance of multi-residential developments. The two main criteria that are regulated include energy and water use.

Section J of the NCC 2019 Volume One governs energy efficiency of buildings and provides that a building, and its services, is required to use energy efficiently so that the greenhouse gas emissions associated with its operation are minimised. This is subject to the intended use of the building and the necessary level of occupant comfort. For buildings that are air-conditioned, the amount of energy has also been quantified.

The Guide to Section J states the following:

The objection of this Section is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reflects the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) decision in 2009 that a building is to be capable of reducing its greenhouse gas emissions. Initially this was achieved by efficiently using energy. In BCA 2010, this was broadened to include consideration of the greenhouse intensity of the energy used for the building's services.

It should also be noted that the goal is not focused on occupant comfort. The measures are based on achieving an internal environment in which the conditions are sufficiently tolerable for occupants to minimise their use of services including artificial heating, cooling or lighting.

The energy used over the life of a building has an operational energy component and an embodied energy component. Operational energy, and the related greenhouse gas emissions, is the focus of the NCC at this time; broader environmental sustainability measures may be considered in the future.

NCC Volume 3 ('the plumbing code') governs standards for plumbing work. Section B governs water services such as cold and heated water services, firefighting water services and rainwater harvesting and use standards. Section C governs sanitary plumbing and drainage systems.

Typical of each subsection are statements containing references to environmental objectives. Reproduced below is an example from Part B1 Cold Water Services:

**Explanatory information:**

**OBJECTIVE**

**BO1**

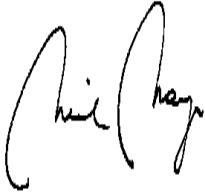
The Objective of this Part is to—

- (a) safeguard people from illness, injury or *loss* (including *loss of amenity*) due to the failure of a cold water installation; and
- (b) ensure that a cold water installation is suitable; and
- (c) conserve water and energy; and**
- (d) safeguard the environment; and**
- (e) safeguard public and private infrastructure; and
- (f) ensure that a cold water installation is designed and is capable of being maintained so that throughout its serviceable life it will continue to satisfy Objectives (a) to (e).

Throughout the code there are standards imposed that limit the flow rate and flush volume of various types of fixtures and facilities which give effect to the objectives stated above.

In relation to specific controls the code generally requires that either a system is either designed to meet AS/NZS 3500 or otherwise be designed by a suitably qualified person to meet the performance requirements of the code. There are various controls that could be said to further the objectives of safeguarding the environment. One example would be the requirement that sanitary drainage systems are isolated from stormwater drainage systems, or that backflow prevention devices are installed to prevent wastewater from entering the potable water supply.

*As signatory to this report, I certify that, pursuant to Section 55(1) of the Local Government Act 1993, I hold no interest, as referred to in Section 49 of the Local Government Act 1993, in matters contained in this report.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil Noye', written in a cursive style.

Neil Noye  
**DIRECTOR CITY PLANNING**

Date: 25 November 2020  
File Reference: F20/124660; 13-1-10