VICTORIAN BUILDING AUTHORITY

Building Surveyor Audit Program

Volume 1 Class 2 – 9 Buildings

January 2022 – June 2022

VICTORIA State Government

ABORIGINAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The VBA respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water upon which we rely. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life.

We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, working towards equality of outcomes and an equal voice.

Authorised by the
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Available online at **www.vba.vic.gov.au**

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ACRONYMS

RBS	Relevant Building Surveyor
DtS	Deemed-to-Satisfy
NCC	National Construction Code
NCZ	Non-Climbable Zone

1. ABOUT

The Victorian Building Authority's (VBA) Building Surveyor Audit Program (BSAP) is a regulatory initiative that seeks to identify and reduce non-compliant building work in Victoria in line with the Minister's Statement of Expectation. The program involves the desktop review of building permit and occupancy permit documentation to ensure registered practitioners are carrying out their functions correctly. This report details the BSAP findings.

1.1 VBA Compliance and Enforcement

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) is responsible for monitoring and enforcing compliance with the *Building Act 1993* (the Act) and associated regulations and guidelines, including the National Construction Code and Code of Conduct for Building Surveyors in Victoria.

The Act provides for plumbing and building work to be carried out so that it meets minimum standards of safety, health, and amenity. It requires people and companies undertaking building and plumbing work to be registered or licensed practitioners. It also provides for various enforcement tools to be used where individuals and companies fail to comply with the requirements of Act.

The VBA's compliance and enforcement decisions are made according to the Compliance and Enforcement Policy.

The VBA's twice-yearly Compliance and Enforcement Report is designed to give industry, practitioners, and the community an insight into the VBA's activities. To safeguard Victoria's future, the VBA is strengthening its capacity to take firm action when needed to keep Victorians safe and hold practitioners to account. As Victoria's building and plumbing regulator, the VBA'S starting point is that individuals want to do the right thing. That's why we are enhancing our risk-based regulatory model that will encourage and incentivise good behaviour, while discouraging poor performance.

1.2 Building Suveyor Audit Program Benefits

The benefit of the Building Surveyor Audit Program (BSAP) is to improve safety and compliance outcomes for building work in Victoria.

Building surveyors perform a crucial role in the building approval process to ensure we live in a safe, accessible and energy efficient built environment. The *Building Act 1993* gives building surveyors in Victoria the power to issue building permits, occupancy permits and enforce compliance with the Act, Regulations and National Construction Code.

Section 17 of the Act allows for applications for building permits to be made to a municipal building surveyor or private building surveyor appointed under Part 6 of the Act. Section 24 of the Act requires, among other things, that the relevant building surveyor refuse to issue a building permit unless he or she is satisfied that the building work and the building permit will comply with the Act and the building regulations.

As building surveyors perform a crucial role in the building approval process, monitoring their compliance provides an avenue for oversight of the building industry's performance.

Information and intelligence gathered through BSAP enables the VBA to identify areas of concern warranting further investigation and possible need for improvement of industry practice and the regulatory framework.

Data from the audits is used to guide education as well as the enforcement and compliance activity.

The results of audits are communicated to practitioners. While BSAP has an educative nature, where non-compliances are identified, practitioners which can include plumbers, builders and engineers may, among other compliance measures, be subject to enforcement action in line with the VBA's Compliance and Enforcement Policy.

1.3 What are our powers?

Section 197 of the *Building Act 1993* (the Act) provides that it is a function of the VBA to:

(a) monitor and enforce compliance with the Act and regulations; not,

(b) supervise and monitor the conduct and ability to practice of registered building practitioners; not,

(c) provide information on matters relating to –
   i. building standards; and
   ii. the regulation of buildings, building work and building practitioners

(d) provide information and training to assist persons and bodies in carrying out functions under this Act or the regulations.

1.4 What was the scope?

The scope of this audit is Class 2-9 buildings with a mixture of rise in storeys located throughout the state for compliance against the performance requirements of sections B, C, D, E and F of the National Construction Code Volume 1.

1.5 How did we do it?

The VBA carried out desktop audits on 29 Class 2-9 buildings located within 21 municipalities in Victoria. The locations of the audits are shown in Figure 1.

The practitioners and buildings were selected using a risk-based selection criteria utilising data from across the VBA such as Proactive Inspection Program (PIP) results, complaints data and practitioner discipline to identify areas of high risk. Site selection criteria considers data such as building use e.g. places for sleeping, rise in storeys, occupant numbers, type of construction and location, such as bushfire prone areas.

To ensure a high value audit program, the audits are scoped based on risk assessment to align with a focus on known risks and the VBA Register of Harms, including:

- fires in buildings
- building collapse or structural damage
- children drowning
- threat to life and safety
- water ingress
- fit for purpose.

The risk-based nature of the program means that the audits do not assess compliance with all NCC requirements and as such the audited permit documents may have other unidentified compliance issues.

A total of 27 Building Surveyors were responsible for the sites selected.

This consisted of:

- Sixteen Class 2 apartment buildings
- Four Class 3 residential building
- One Class 4 dwelling building
- Three Class 5 offices
- Four Class 7 storage type buildings and
- One Class 8 processing buildings.

The Section 30 building permit documentation was used to assess each building for sufficiency of the information to enable the Building Surveyor to determine compliance, and whether compliance was achieved against Performance Requirement BP1.1, BP1.2, BP1.4, CP1 to CP9, DP2 to DP7, EP1.1 to EP1.6, EP2.1 to EP2.2, EP4.1 to EP4.3, FP1.4 and GP5.1 of the National Construction Code (NCC), Building Code of Australia (BCA) Volume One.

Where there was no performance solution documented to satisfy the performance requirement, the assessment was undertaken against the Deemed-to-Satisfy requirements (DtS).

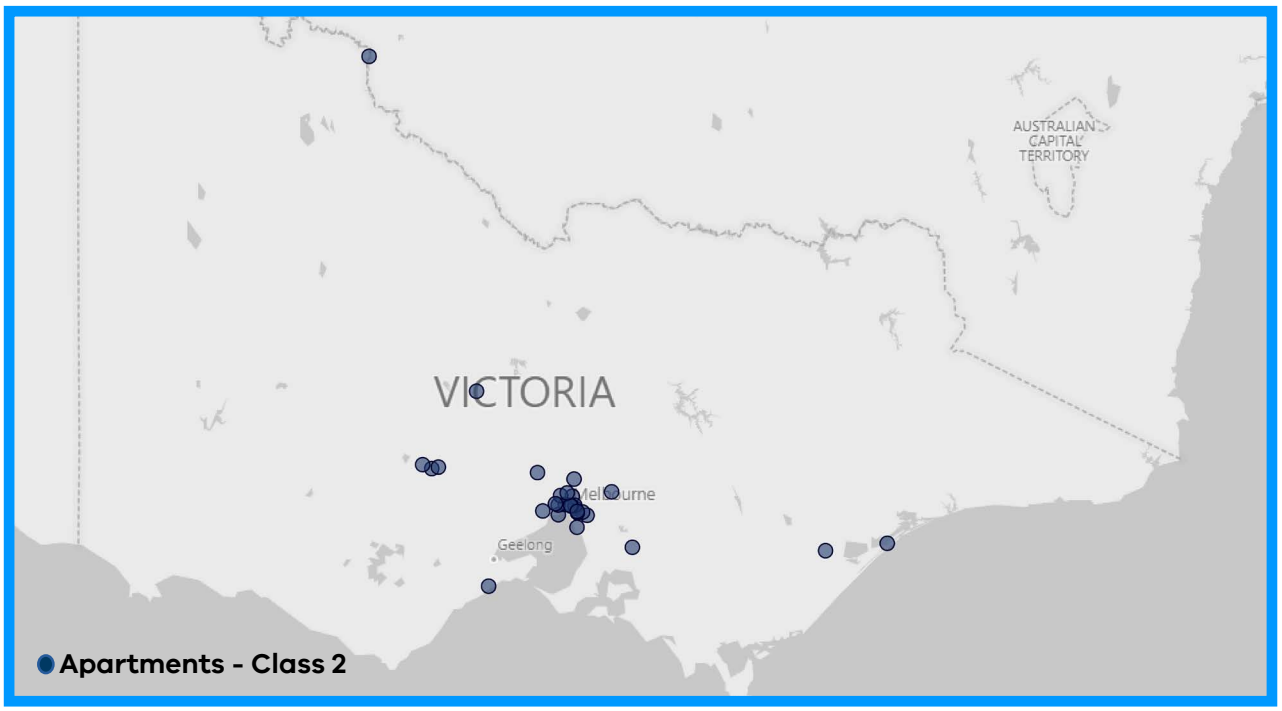

Figure 1. Audit locations in Victoria.

1.6 Action taken by the VBA

Where compliance risks were identified, the VBA sent notification to Relevant Building Surveyors (RBS). Typically, these notifications require the practitioners to:

- provide any relevant documentation (such as an approved performance solution, engineering drawings or certificate of compliance from a registered practitioner) showing how the work meets the requirements under the building legislation – this is because practitioners are currently not required to lodge this documentation with the VBA; or
- provide the VBA with proof the work has been/and will be brought into compliance (e.g. amended building permit).

The RBS is expected to manage any rectification required, using their enforcement powers.

Although the program has an education focus, where serious non-compliances are identified practitioners are referred for further investigation in line with the VBA Compliance and Enforcement Policy.

1.7 Next steps

The next steps after publishing this report will be to use the information collected from the audits to:

- engage with industry stakeholders about causes, challenges, and ways to improve
- developing an education strategy and provide education to building practitioners
- allow for target issues identified through proactive inspections and other regulatory functions
- monitor for improvement of issues identified
- advocate for legislative changes and reforms to improve regulatory process.

2. AUDIT FINDINGS

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Of the 29 audits completed, all audits had at least one item where it was considered that the RBS could not have determined compliance was achieved.

The results of the audits for sufficient documentation for the RBS to make a determination on compliance varied from 18 per cent for weatherproofing to 91 per cent for provisions of escape.

Where there was sufficient information to determine compliance, the results for compliance varied from 17 per cent for weatherproofing to a high of 88 per cent for provisions for escape. Overall, when the results from the 29 audits were averaged, of the 110 clauses assessed there were found to be on average 17 items per audit where the RBS could not have been satisfied that compliance was achieved.

3. DOCUMENTATION INSIGHTS

Documentation insufficiencies across all audits are shown in Figure 2.

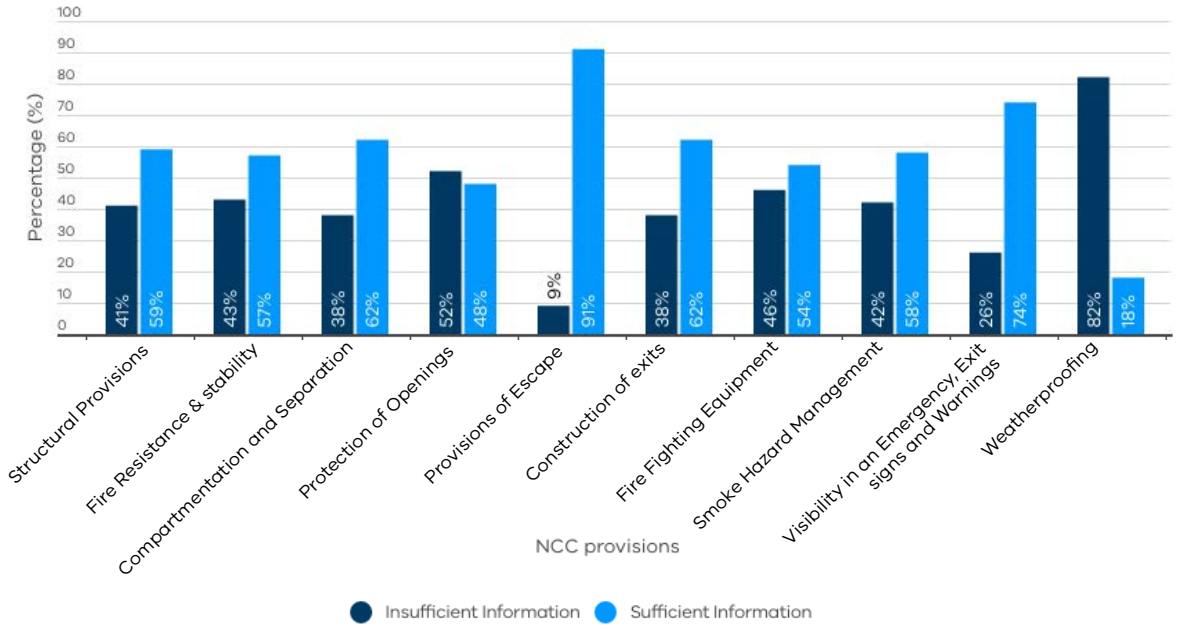

Figure 2. Documentation insufficiencies across all audits, where applicable.

4. COMPLIANCE INSIGHTS

The compliance levels, that is where compliance had been demonstrated, across all audits are shown in Figure 3.

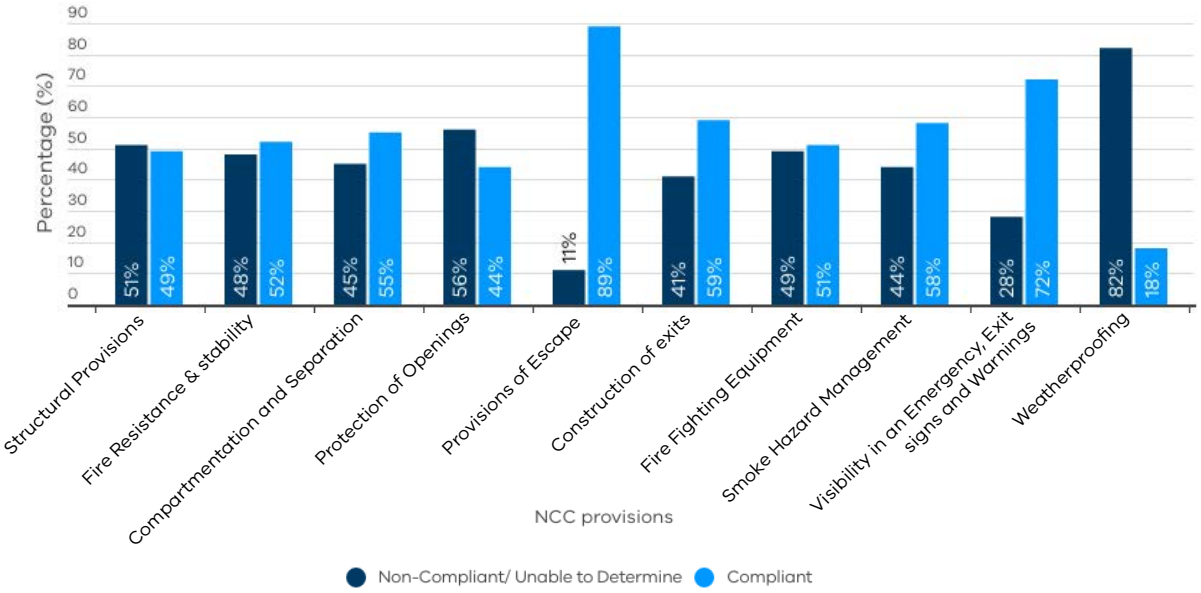

Figure 3. Compliance level across all audits.

The average prevalence of compliance not being demonstrated based on the rise in storeys[1] across all audits are shown in Figure 4.

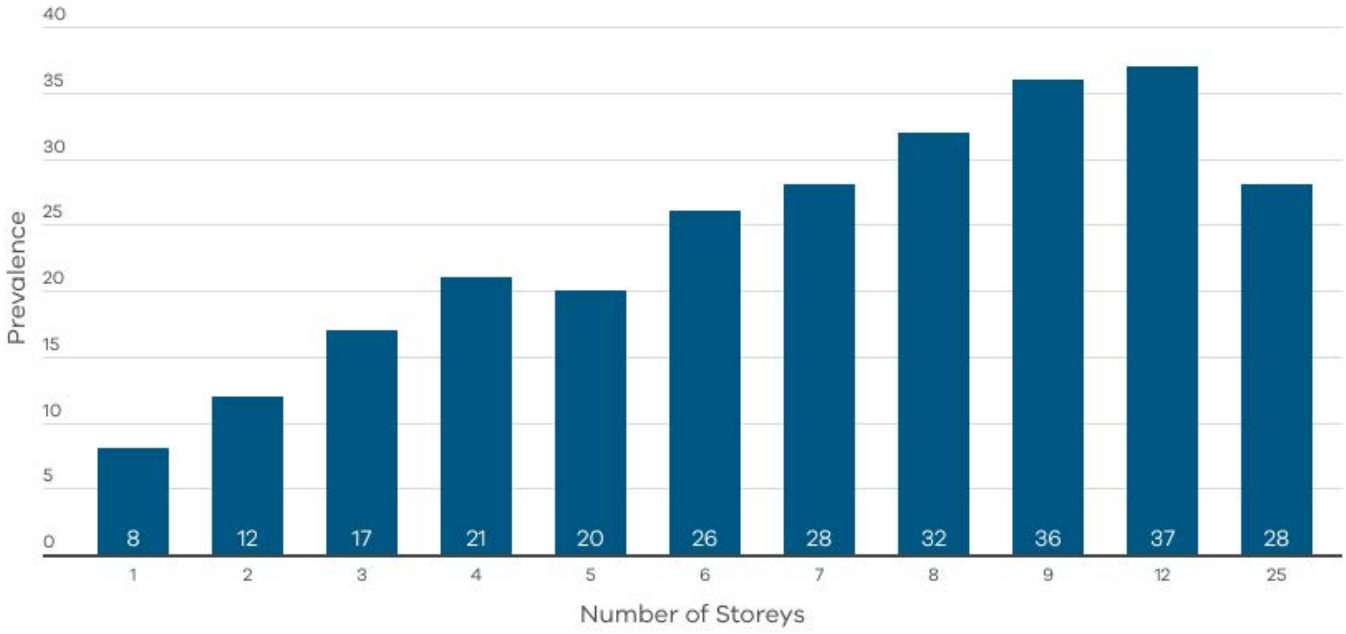

Figure 4. Compliance issues across all audits per number of storeys[1].

The average prevalence of items where compliance was not being demonstrated based on NCC provisions across all audits are shown in Figure 5.

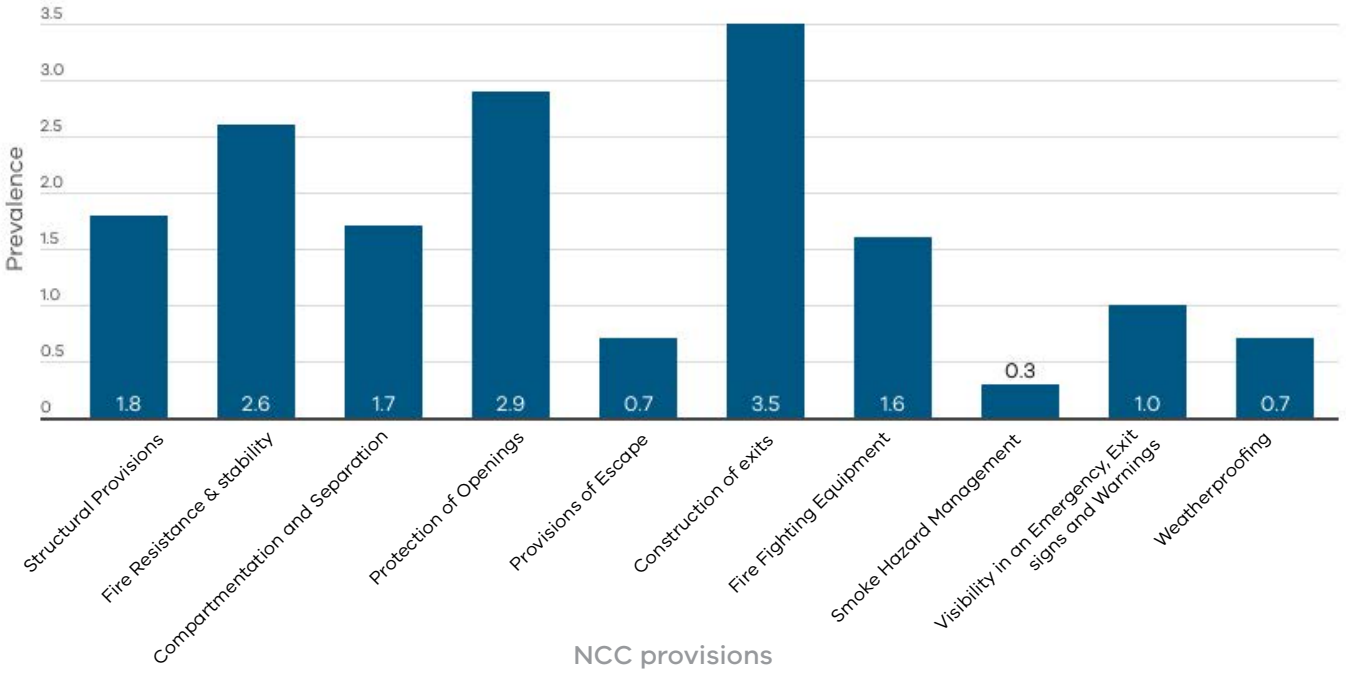

Figure 5. Average compliance not being by NCC provisions across all audits.

[1]Limited number of audits undertaken on 5, 6, 8 and 12 storey buildings. No audits on those rise in storeys not listed.

5. SPECIFIC COMPLIANCE INSIGHTS

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The following sections provide details of specific types of non-compliances identified in the audits.

5.1 Section B – Structure

In most cases the RBS relied on a compliance certificate issued under s.238 of the Act. Where these certificates had been relied on, there were issues identified with them, that included:

- the certificate did not address all the relevant performance requirements and standards e.g. standards from the AS1170 series were missing;
- the wrong volume and/or version of the NCC was used e.g. the certificate referenced Volume 2 rather than Volume 1 or NCC2016 rather than NCC2019 ;
- the certificate had the wrong building characteristic such as rise in storeys, effective height, classification, and;
- the certificate was not in the correct form e.g. not addressed to the RBS.

Other issues identified in audits included:

- earthquake loading not addressed, and;
- no evidence that warnings produced in calculation software were addressed.

5.2 Section C - Fire Resistance

5.2.1 Fire Resistance and Stability

5.2.1.1 Type of Construction

Of the 29 buildings audited:

- Thirteen required Type A construction
- Seven Class 2 building required Type B construction unless clause C1.5 can be applied
- Nine required a minimum of Type C Construction
- 13 had a rise in storey of two[2].

5.2.1.2 Specification C1.1

Issues identified with the application of Specification C1.1, when a performance solution was not used, included:

- specifying the incorrect Fire Resistance Level (FRL).
- not specifying an FRL where an FRL was required.
- not having the appropriate evidence of suitability to confirm that the FRL would be achieved.
- relying on a Redbook CSR system, however the system detailed on the plan was not identical to that in the Redbook and there was no report from an Accredited Testing Laboratory (ATL) to support the change from the tested prototype.
- using internal CSR wall systems for external wall types.
- system was from outside only.

[2]The majority of building surveyors that are issuing building permits for class two buildings only had a rise in storeys of two and this also includes other building classes.

Non-compliances were also identified where a performance solution was used. These included:

- the performance solutions not addressing all the deviations from the DtS e.g. only dealt with reduced FRL in the top story whereas the external walls on all levels were proposed to have reduced level.

It was identified that requirements of the Fire Engineering Report (FER) to support the performance solution were not detailed in the plans and some requirements of the FER could not be achieved.

5.2.1.3 Calculation of Rise in Storeys

There were two audits where the rise in storeys was not nominated on the building permit.

5.2.1.4 Clause C1.8 Lightweight construction (Specification C1.8)

There were 12 audits where compliance with C1.8 was not demonstrated. This occurred from:

- the failure to have evidence of suitability to demonstrate that the material would comply.
- wall types that were approved on the plan were based on a CSR system, however the referenced system was not identical to that in the CSR Redbook.
- wall types were approved based on an internal wall system, when it was an external wall.

5.2.1.5 Non-combustibility and fire hazard properties

There were 10 audits where the RBS could not have been satisfied that the external wall would be non-combustible. Two of which were non-compliant.

Key findings include:

- insufficient evidence of suitability that the material, including insulation, was non-combustible.
- the two noncompliances identified on the buildings of type B construction where EPS and timber cladding
- Issues with non-combustibility also arose where the type of construction had been changed from type C to Type B in order to overcome the volume limits in C2.2 for a type C building
- 27 audits did not have sufficient evidence of suitability to confirm that all the lining materials in the building had the required fire hazard properties and complied with specifications C1.10, where not exempt.
- where the RBS was required to demonstrate how compliance was achieved post audit that fire hazards properties complied, they were able to provide this information that should've been submitted as part of the section 30 docs.

5.2.2 Compartmentation and separation

There were a total of 42 occurrences for applicable items in compartmentation and separation where compliance was not demonstrated in 29 audits.

There were:

- Two audits where the RBS could not have been satisfied that there was vertical separation of openings in type A construction.
- Ten audit that did not show the FRL separating the classification in different storeys.

The most prevalent causes were:

- the incorrect wall FRL and no performance solution to reduce the FRL, or the nominated wall system not achieving the required FRL, where classifications in same storeys were required to be separated either in accordance with the DtS or the requirements of the fire engineering report forming part of the performance solutions.
- the incorrect floor FRL and no performance solution to reduce the FRL, or the nominated floor system not achieving the required FRL where classification in different storeys were required to be separated either in accordance with the DtS or the requirements of the fire engineering report forming part of the performance solutions.
- the FRL construction in the enclosing walls and doors of electricity supply systems was not detailed in Five audits, most prevalently in main switchboards which sustain emergency equipment operating in emergency mode.
- Six audits had the incorrect FRL or no FRL nominated around the lift shaft.

5.2.3 Protection of Openings

The compliance rate for protection of openings was one of the lowest at 42 per cent.

Sufficient information was only provided in 42 per cent of the audits. On average there were 3.2 occurrences where compliance was not demonstrated per audit for part C3 of Volume 1

There was one building which had solid core doors nominated where fire doors were required as no concessions applied.

These results were mainly related to:

- protection of openings in external walls
- protection of construction joints
- openings in fire-isolated exits
- openings in floors and ceilings for services
- openings for service installations.

5.2.3.1 Protection of openings in external walls

Clause C3.2 protection of openings was addressed by a performance solutions or a combination of solution in 15 of the 23 buildings that required openings in external walls to be protected.

It was identified in the audits that:

- where performance solutions for protection of openings were addressed using a performance solution via a FER, not all openings that required protection had been covered by the FER, and;
- that in the FER, a number of options were proposed as solutions for protecting the openings, such as glazing thickness, sprinkler protection or screening. However, the option being used was not detailed in the plans.

5.2.3.2 Acceptable methods of protection

Where no performance solution was proposed for the protection of openings it was assumed that a DtS solution was being proposed.

Key findings:

- in eight of the audits, it was identified that there was either insufficient information to determine compliance or compliance was not achieved.
- insufficient information included not having the required evidence of suitability such as a test report that the protection method would achieve compliance.
- non-compliances included doors not being the required thickness, not meeting the requirements of specification C3.4 or not being nominated as requiring an FRL, and
- there were no test reports that the window would comply with the specification and that they were identical to the tested prototype.

5.2.3.3 Openings in fire-isolated exits

Opening in fire-isolated exits in 10 of the audits did not have the required protection. This included:

- insufficient evidence of suitability that the opening achieved the FRL, and;
- did not have the required FRL nominated.

5.2.3.4 Openings in fire-isolated lift shafts

In 16 of the audits which had lift shafts that required the openings to the lift shafts to be protected there was:

- no evidence that the lift shaft opening would comply with AS1735.11;
- no specification that the opening was required to be protected, and;
- the four that were compliant had evidence of compliance including a test report for the doors;
- no evidence of suitability that the opening complied with the standard.

5.2.3.5 Openings in floors and ceilings for services

Where a service passes through a floor or ceiling it is required to have a FRL in relation to integrity and insulation. In 13 of the audits the plans and specifications did not show:

- that the elements penetrating the floor or ceiling would comply with the requirements;
- details that a penetration was required to comply;
- how the penetration would comply such as the material/product being used to protect the penetration, or;
- test reports of the product being used to determine that it would comply with the requirements.

5.2.3.6 Openings for service installations

In 18 of the audits there was insufficient information to demonstrate that the services installations penetrating elements required to have a FRL in relation to integrity and insulation that the FRL would be maintained. Missing information included:

- not detailing that a penetration was required to comply;
- how the penetration would comply such as the material/product being used to protect the penetration and;
- no test report of the product being used to determine that it would comply with the requirements.

5.2.3.7 Construction joints

Nineteen of the audits did not show compliance with C3.16 for the construction joints. This included:

- no nomination that the construction joints were to be protected, and;
- where protection was nominated, there was no specification or evidence of suitability that showed the construction joints would be identical to a prototype that when tested in accordance with AS1530.4 would comply.

5.3 Section D – Access and Egress

Performance requirements DP2 to DP7 were considered as part of the audit. Where there were no performance solutions provided, the building was assessed against the DtS requirements of D1 Provision for escape and D2 Construction of exits.

5.3.1 Provision for Escape

Provision for escape had the highest compliance rates in the audits, with 87 per cent compliance achieved.

This was achieved through a mixture of performance solutions and DtS solutions or a combination.

Key finding for provision for escape are:

- all buildings that required a fire isolated exit had one;
- most buildings that did not have the required distance between exits had a performance solution that addressed this;
- there was one building where the path of travel from the point of discharge of a fire-isolated exit necessitates passing within 6 m of the external wall that was not protected;
- there was one audit where a section of the path of travel to an exit was less than 1m and there was no performance solution;
- in 12 of the audits a performance solution was used for at least one of the exits;
- one of the most common performance solutions was for the number of exits for the basement;
- in most cases the basement was provided with only one exit under a performance solution;
- generally, the number of exits provided throughout other parts of the building complied with D1.2;

- 15 of the audits utilised a performance solution or a combination of solutions for travel distances;
- two audits had a non-compliance with the DtS for travel distances and there was no performance solution.

5.3.2 Construction of Exits

There was a compartively high compliance rate generally in the construction of exits, with a 59 per cent compliance rate achieved.

Despite this there were on average 3.7 items where compliance was not demonstrated per audit. There were eight non-compliances. The results were mainly related to:

- swinging doors
- barriers to prevent falls
- protection of openable windows
- barriers to prevent falls
- landings
- operation of latch (Vic D2.21a)
- signs on doors, and
- goings and risers.

Key compliance findings:

- of the six audits where D2.4 Separation of rising and descending stair flights applied, four had a compliant solution, with five satisfied via a performance solution
- there was three audits which had doors that swung against the direction of egress and no performance solutions
- there were 10 occasions where thresholds to doorways did not meet D2.15.

5.3.2.1 Separation of Rising and descending stairs

Two audits were non-compliant, one of which had a performance solution. This was the result of:

- requirements of FER not achieved on plans and;
- no performance solutions and stairs not separated.

5.3.2.2 Goings and risers

Stairs in 23 of the audits did not show adequate detail for the RBS to determine that the goings and risers would comply. This included:

- no section details or dimensions nominated on the stairs, and;
- only general notes about goings and risers to comply with table D2.13.

5.3.2.3 Landings

Twenty one of the audits did not show compliance for landings. Key issues included:

- the landings not having dimension or no details of the landing;
- the landing dimension was less than that required;
- slip resistance was not nominated, and;
- no evidence the slip resistance complied with AS4586.

5.3.2.4 Barriers to prevent falls

Eight of the audits did not show how a barrier required to prevent falls would comply with D2.16. Barriers did not:

- have the heights nominated on them
- details of the gaps or horizontal members.

5.3.2.5 Handrails

In three of the audits there was insufficient information to determine that the handrails complied with D2.17. Missing information included:

- plans not showing that a handrail was required on at least one side of the stairs;
- no details of the height that the handrail was at;
- that there were not obstructions that would break the handhold and;
- that they were provided in accordance with AS1428.

5.3.2.6 Swinging doors

Five of the audits had swinging doors that did not comply with D2.20. These doors had:

- encroachments on stair landings, and;
- did not swing in the direction of egress.

5.3.2.7 Operation of latch (Vic D2.21a)

Ten of the audits did not demonstrate that the latches on doors in required exits would operate as required by D2.21. In the audits there:

- were no door hardware schedules, and;
- doors were not nominated as being required to have a latch that complies with D2.21.

5.3.2.8 Signs on doors

There was no signage, or signage scheduling nominating that doors that were required to have signage alerting a person to the operation of the door in five of the audits. This signage is required to ensure doors that provide protections to exits, and separate exits from other areas of the building, are not obstructed to hinder occupant evacuation, or kept open allowing smoke and fire to spread, compromising occupant evacuation.

5.3.2.9 Protection of openable windows

Certain windows in class 2 buildings are required to be protected to prevent injury to building occupants. Nine of the audits did not have sufficient detail to show that windows had the required protection. These audits did not have any details of:

- how the window opening was restricted;
- the window being required to be restricted, and;
- test reports or evidence that showed they would withstand 250N horizontal force.

5.4 Section E - Services and Equipment

Sufficient information was provided 47, 59 and 72 per cent of the time for firefighting equipment, smoke hazard management and visibility in an emergency, exit signs and warning systems respectively which resulted in compartively high compliance rates. Where there was sufficient information provided, compliance was achieved in:

- 46 per cent for firefighting equipment;
- 63 per centfor smoke hazard management, and;
- 74% for Visibility in an emergency, exit signs and warning systems.

5.4.1 Firefighting equipment

5.4.1.1 Fire hydrants

Where a DtS solution was not used, a report and consent was obtained from the relevant authority for:

- hydrant coverage shortfalls;
- the use of mag flow meters, and;
- booster assemblies located within 10 metres of the building.

Issues identified in the audits for fire hydrants included:

- no pressure flow tests to support the use of street hydrant, and;
- The architectural drawings and services drawings having conflicting information about the location of the hydrants.

5.4.1.2 Fire hose reels

Fourteen of the audits required fire hose reels in the building, primarily the car park.

- there were performance solutions to omit the use of fire hose reels in non-residential parts of building.
- the location of fire hose reels, including within four meters of the exit, where required, was demonstrated in all audits.

5.4.1.3 Sprinklers

Of the 13 buildings that required sprinkler protection:

- Six used DtS provisions.
- Seven had a combination of DtS and performance solutions;
- sprinklers were provided to balconies where required;
- performance solutions were obtained to remove sprinklers in bathrooms above showers and in lift shafts, and;
- report and consents were obtained for sprinkler valve locations as required by regulation 129 where they did not comply with the standard.

5.4.1.4 Portable fire extinguishers

- There was one audit which had a performance solution for portable fire extinguishers;
- 13 of the audits did not have plans that showed the locations of portable fire extinguishers, and;
- there were three audits that were non-complaint this included extinguishers being more than 10m from the SOU door.

5.4.1.5 Fire precautions during construction

20 of the audits did not have details of fire precautions required during construction.

Where fire precautions during construction were nominated:

- this was primarily by the use of conditions on the permit, and;
- permit conditions that had limited information, however there were audits which provided good detail of the type of precautions required and when/ where these were required.

5.4.2 Smoke hazard management

Generally smoke exhaust systems were provided where required. In 10 of the audits there was insufficient information or incorrect information detailed on the plans which included:

- smoke detection systems not provided to locations required to have detection, such as in storage areas;
- there were plans that did not show certain apartments as having smoke detection systems;
- there was missing information in specifications, such as the detection system required to be connected to mains power or building occupant warning system, and;
- there were plans that did not reflect requirements of the FER for additional detection systems to satisfy a performance solution e.g. thermal/heat detector hasn't been indicated on fire service plan to the lift shaft.

Where smoke detection system layouts had been provided the nominated locations were generally in accordance with the requirements.

5.4.3 Visibility in an Emergency, Exit Signs and Warning Systems

5.4.3.1 Emergency lighting requirements

Emergency lighting was required in 24 of the audits and there were no performance solutions nominated for EP4.1 in any of the buildings.

Two audits did not show compliance with the DtS requirements. This included:

- did not show or specify that the design and operation of the emergency lighting would comply with AS/NZS 2293.1 as required by clause E4.4.

5.4.3.2 Exit signs

There were nine audits where compliance for exit signs was not demonstrated. This included:

- plans that did not show exits signs where they were required
- exit signs were nominated in the incorrect location, and
- compliance with AS/NZS 2293.1 as required by clause E4.8 was not specified.

5.4.3.3 Direction signs

In five of the audits that required directional signage compliance with the DtS requirements were not achieved because:

- there were areas of the building that an exit was not readily apparent to an occupant and there was no directional signage.

5.5 Section F – Health and Amenity

The audits focused only on performance requirement FP1.4.

5.5.1 Performance requirement FP1.4 Weatherproofing

83 per cenet of audits did not demonstrate that performance requirement FP1.4 for weather proofing was satisfied.

This was the result of:

- there not being a performance solution completed for any external walls;
- a performance solution not being completed for all external wall systems;
- the evidence of suitability being relied on was not appropriately assessed, eg limitations and conditions of Codemark not met, and;
- where a Codemark or the like was relied on for the external wall systems the RBS did not undertake a determination as required under r.38 of the Regulations.

6. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

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A key observation from the audits was that requirements detailed in performance solutions were not always detailed on plans.

Often it is considered that the plans and specifications lacked sufficient details for the RBS to make a determination that the performance requirement had been complied with. This was caused by a lack of detailing in the plans and a lack of evidence of suitability to support the use of a product, form of construction or material. Part A governing requirements set out the form in which evidence of suitability is required. This can for example be in the form of a certificate, test report or another form of documentary evidence. Further to this, elements requiring an FRL have further requirements on the evidence of suitability required. Test reports demonstrating that wall systems would achieve the required FRL were not provided. There was also a lack of evidence that lining materials had the required fire hazard properties.

7. POST AUDIT ACTIONS

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As part of the audit where non-compliances were identified or there were items where there was insufficient information in the plans and documentation to determine whether compliance was achieved, the RBS was required to provide a response.

Where RBS's were required to provide a response to items identified by the VBA in the audit, RBS's were generally responsive and able to provide the required information, including evidence of suitability.

There were some occasions where the RBS had to take enforcement action to achieve compliance including the issuance of building notices. There were items where performance solutions were required to confirm that compliance had been achieved.

In some instances initial responses from RBS compliance was not demonstrated. This included that the information provided was not evidence of suitability in accordance with the governing requirements. For example manufacturers brochures were provided for non-combustibility or fire hazard properties rather than the required test reports.

8. AUDIT CHALLENGES

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Consistent with the last report a challenge faced during the audits was determining whether information forming part of the building permit had not been provided or that it never existed to start with. There is no requirement for the building surveyor to list the documentation they have relied on to determine compliance on the building permit. If building surveyors were required to list all the documentation that they have relied on to make a decision on the building permit it would be easier to determine if information is missing. This would also be beneficial to those on site, as they could look at the listed documentation and know if they were missing any information. This will assist in reducing the risk of onsite non-compliance from lack of access to appropriate documentation.

Furthermore, the VBA is not a central repository of information, therefore there is a reliance on all information being provided to council by the RBS and then this information being provided to the VBA. This can be overcome by the VBA being a central repository of information.

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