

# Building and Construction Sector of the Building Act and Resource Management Act Reviews



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# Building Code and Compliance Documents

- Building Act review confirmed previous findings about the lack of clarity and specificity about performance requirements
- Priority on safety and health
- Proposals in preparation for Protection from Fire, Protection from Noise, Signs, and Warning Systems. Likely to be consulted on later this year
- Technical update of NZS3604 in final stages (Standards New Zealand); DBH update of E2/AS1 aligned with it, and likely to be consulted on later this year
- Recent updating of referenced documents in 11 Compliance Documents (published 1 July)
- Using guidance to assist designers with specific designs where Acceptable Solutions not suitable eg Solar Water Heating



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## Regulatory Reform – Building Act review and RMA review

- Both reviews are part of Government's Regulatory reform agenda
- Better regulation, less regulation
- Reducing regulatory barriers and streamlining processes
- Maintaining quality, supporting innovation and economic development
  
- Both reviews are in Cabinet process
- Limits detail on what can be said



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## Building Act review

- Initiated in July 2009
- Discussion document released February 2010 with a package of options for reform
- Submissions closed 23 April 2010



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## Major themes for consultation

- Clarifying the purpose and principles of Building Act
- A more balanced approach to building control
  - Extending Schedule 1
  - Streamlined process for low risk residential building work
  - Streamlined process for complex commercial building work
- Building consumer confidence



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## Objectives for change

- Quality homes and buildings produced through a business-enabling and efficient regulatory system
- Consumers able to make informed decisions, with confidence in carrying out transactions in building and housing market
- Home and buildings produced cost-effectively by a productive sector with the right skills and knowledge
- A regulatory system that is administered in an efficient and cost-effective manner



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## Policy response

- Broadening of Schedule 1 exemptions
- Streamlined process for some low risk residential buildings
- Changes to commercial building consent processes
- Strengthening contractual arrangements, warranties and consumer information



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# Resource Management Phase 2 Review

- Ten workstream in total
- Three of particular interest to building and construction sector
  - Resource Management / Building Act interface
  - Infrastructure
  - Urban planning



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## Objectives for change

- Least cost delivery of good environmental outcomes, including:
  - Providing greater central government direction in resource management
  - Improving economic efficiency of implementation without compromising underlying environmental integrity
  - Avoiding duplication of processes under the RMA and other Acts (eg, the building Act, Historic places Act)
  - Achieving efficient and improved participation of Maori in resource management processes



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## Resource Management Act / Building Act interface

- Consistency and certainty in decision making
- Consistency of standards and definitions
- Inconsistency of controls in residential areas
- Lack of understanding of the differences between resource consents and building consents by public and professionals
- Risk-adverse behaviour of local authorities

Summarised as

- **INCONSISTENT CONSENT REQUIREMENTS LEADING TO DEVELOPMENT UNCERTAINTY**
- **UNNECESSARY DELAYS IN PROCESSING**



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## Options identified by sector group

- Using national policy instruments like model plans and national policy statements to create consistency in definitions, performance standards and plan format
- Streamlined process for simple resource consents, aligning with Building Consenting processes
- Developing 'best practice' process and guidance for local authorities and professionals



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## Infrastructure and urban planning

- Workstreams looking at ways to achieve better urban planning outcomes and more efficient processes for infrastructure development
- Minister for the Environment appointed independent Technical Advisory groups which have just reported back
- Their recommendations and a discussion document developed by officials to be released in late August



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