

# Certification Assessor Bulletin



C.H. Group Pty Ltd

## CAB First Edition

Welcome to the first edition of the "Certification Assessor Bulletin",.

CAB will be a periodic publication on a needs basis to provide Assessors with information on Department of Health and Aging policy and Building Code of Australia updates as they relate to Aged Care Certification Assessment process.

The purpose of CAB is to assist in ensure consistency in the application of the Certification Assessment Instrument and Guidelines by Assessors throughout Australia. CAB will contain the latest policy, regulatory and BCA interruption. The practical application of the BCA will be taken from a combination of feed back from the Assessor in the field and from years of experience by C.H. Group in the application and involvement in the development of the Aged Care Certification Assessment Instrument and Guidelines.

We also hope to use CAB to provide personal points of interest that may be of interest to the team.

It has been six months since our appointment by the Department of Health and Ageing and I would like to say a **big thank you** to all the team of Assessors, in house staff, Brian Corbishley, Carolyn Scheetz and their team for making the past six months transition so successful.



Nice picture but no idea what city it is

### Special points of interest:

- A big thank you
- Protection of Openings
- Class 3 fire rating of internal walls
- Definition of Openings
- Small Homes Assessments

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## Fire Compartmentation—Protection of Openings

A recently constructed facility had openings and walls from opposing fire compartments within the distances as setout in BCA Clause C3.3 but had not protected the openings and the external wall in accordance with Clause C3.4. The external wall did not have an FRL of 60/60/60 and the windows did not have fire shutters or drenchers with fixed or automatic shutting windows.

The Building Surveyor for the project under took a Fire Engineer Alternative Design Solution (ADS) and approved the design using the relevant performance clauses of the BCA to allow the windows not to be protected. Normally that would be the end of the issue as the Certification Assessment (CA) recognizes Alternative Solutions when signed of by the BS. However, what the BS didn't consider in the ADS was that the external wall was of brick veneer construction. The internal structural leaf of the wall was timber with standard plaster and the outer leaf a non-loadbearing brick construction.

The BS incorrectly quoted BCA Specification C1.1 clause 5.1 were it states that a wall required to have an FRL under Table 5.1 of Specification C1.1 need only be tested from the outside. The issue of exposure of openings and external walls to other fire compartments is not considered under Table 5.1 but is referenced in BCA clause C3.3 with the external wall requiring to have an of FRL of 60/60/60. Therefore the concessions applying to Table 5.1 does not apply to everywhere a wall is required to have an FRL and a standard BV wall will not achieve an FRL when tested from both sides.

Assessors need to be mindful of the requirement to provide an external wall with an FRL of not less than 60/60/60 when the wall is exposed to another fire compartment within the distances detailed in BCA clause C3.3.

## Fire Compartmentation— Class 3 Hostel

BCA Specification C1.1 Table 3.1, 4.1 and 5.1 requires that all walls in a non-sprinkler protected Class 3 building bounding a public corridor are required to have an FRL. This includes all common rooms, reception, offices and bedroom internal walls bounding a public corridor or lobby.

Glazed walls bounding public corridors are not acceptable in a Class 3 non-sprinkler protected building.

Doorway openings in the internal walls must have a self-

closing fire door or 35mm thick solid core self-closing doors depending on the "Type" of construction required.

This requirement does not apply to Class 9c and 9a Type C and B buildings.

### Sprinklered Protected Option

Concessions apply when a fire sprinkler system to AS2118.4 is installed.

Victoria Amendment H103.1 deletes the requirement for internal walls to have an FRL under certain conditions

In all other States and Territories the BCA Specification C1.1 Clause 2.9 only provides for a deletion of the FRL requirements to non-loadbearing walls in a fire sprinkler protected building.

Loadbearing internal walls may have their FRL reduced under certain circumstances



Glazed internal corridor walls

## Definition of Levels

The Certification Instrument analyses the provision of toilets and ablutions across aged care facilities. As well as meeting the ratios, new facilities are required to have toilets and ablutions distributed across the facility.

The Instrument analyses the ratios on a building by building, level by level and wing by wing-basis. This analysis is based on the building information

tables at the beginning of the instrument.

Assessors ensure that the information in the tables for each building and level are correct

Where a floor consists of a split level, it is regarded as 2 levels if the difference in level is greater than 1 meter for the purposes of compliance with the Instrument distribution requirements..

*A level is defined as a change in height of 1 metre for the purposes of assessing the distribution of the ablation ratios only*

## Subsidized Program (Small Homes)

The Department of Health & Ageing has confirmed the subsidised program for small residential facilities (less than 25 beds) will proceed.

There are 193 eligible facilities, which may be provided with a free or subsidized certification assessment.

C.H. Group will carry out all of the assessments for those

facilities which accept the DHA's offer.

We have recently written to all eligible facilities seeking an expression of interest. We expecting (hoping) a high number of acceptances.

The program of assessments is near finalization and the completion date for the assessments is expected in

November 2005.

We have been contacting all assessors to determine availability to undertake these additional assessments over this period.





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## **Grand Father Titheradge**

Congratulations to Stuart and Robin Titheridge on the arrival of their first grandson.

It just goes to show that old Building Surveyors never die they just become experienced Certification Assessors.

Rumor has it that Stuart believes if you can't find good Building Surveyors breed them.

