



# codewords

## Multiple-Use Approvals to speed up building consents

Volume builders and building consent authorities are showing a lot of interest in a new service being put in place by the Department that will save time and money in the building consent process.

From 1 February 2010, volume builders will be able to apply for National Multi-Use Approvals (NMUAs) for building designs that will be repeated multiple times over in any part of the country.

*Continued on page 2*



**APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR FINALISTS:** The 10 finalists in the Apprentice of the Year competition, along with Minister for Building and Construction, Hon Maurice Williamson, and Department of Building and Housing Chief Executive Katrina Bach (centre). The Department is a major sponsor of the competition which attracted a record number of entries this year (see page 2).

### what's inside

- 02** 2009 Apprentice of the Year
- 03** Building Act review under way
- 04** Weathertightness remediation needs a consent  
Highlights in a challenging year
- 05** Standards referenced in Compliance Documents to be updated
- 06** Evaluating building safety quickly after an emergency  
Installation of fire sprinklers in houses promoted
- 08** Well-sealed shower penetrations prevent water damage
- 09** Maintaining passive fire protection systems  
Early Childhood Education Centres and Building Code compliance
- 10** Design guidance for barriers  
Determination 2009/60
- 12** Technical Review programme benefits  
Learning curve



*Multiple-Use Approvals to speed up building consents continued*

Volume builders include group home builders, garage and shed franchisers, suppliers of kitset buildings, certain retirement village builders, and those who replicate a building design more than 10 times in a two-year period.

A NMUA from the Department means that the building design has been 'pre-approved' for Building Code compliance, so the building consent authority (BCA) will only have to assess site-specific details when issuing a building consent.

Once the Department receives a completed application for a NMUA, it will have 40 working days to assess each design.

When a NMUA is used, the BCA will have 10 working days to issue the consent, which will involve checking site conditions, foundations and utilities (such as water services), confirming that the proposed design meets the conditions of the NMUA, and checking any planning requirements. The BCA will also carry out the normal inspections during construction.

BCAs have responded positively to the scheme and expect it will give staff more time to concentrate on complex consent applications. The Department will be working closely with BCA cluster groups to ensure the national approvals service and local consenting processes link smoothly.

For volume builders, the changes will mean cost savings and quicker turn-around times for the local consenting part of the process.

Builders will be able to pass on the savings to their customers, potentially gaining a useful market edge.

A survey of 60 volume builders run by the Department in mid-2009 indicated that almost all are interested in the service, with a large number intending to apply for a NMUA in the first year.

The changes flow out of the Building Amendment Act passed in July this year. In December, Cabinet is expected to finalise regulations on eligibility (who can apply), scope (types of building) and fees.

For queries or comments, check the Department's website, [www.dbh.govt.nz/nmua](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/nmua), or email [nmua@dbh.govt.nz](mailto:nmua@dbh.govt.nz)

## 2009 Apprentice of the Year w

**Hawkes Bay carpentry apprentice Nathan Biggs is the 2009 Apprentice of the Year, coming out on top of the 10 regional finalists in the annual competition sponsored by the Department.**

Now in its sixth year, the competition attracted a record 161 entries.

The Department's Chief Executive Katrina Bach spoke at the evening awards ceremony on 22 October, which was a special celebration for the apprentices, their partners and families.

Nathan is employed by Mackersey Construction in Havelock North, a firm which has been trading since 1948. He showed a passion for building that has seen him take on more responsibility than most apprentices, according to national judge Paul Mitchell from the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO).

'Nathan's ability means he has managed staff and subcontractors, and has taken on the position of health and safety representative in his workplace, managing its ACC partnership programme.

'Nathan has proudly followed his father's footsteps into building and prides himself on the finished product. This is a young man with a very bright future in the industry.'

Shayne Dickinson, 20, of Nelson, was second and Hamilton's Justin Clark, 21, took out third place.

Judging at 10 regional events had taken place throughout September and early October.

# tice inner

The regional winners then gathered in Wellington to compete for the national title. This included a tough interview with four expert carpenters, including the Department's national judge Mark Scully. Regulatory knowledge was included in the judging criteria.

Mark Scully says he found it difficult to select a winner, as all the finalists were highly talented, experienced and knowledgeable. After the judging, the apprentices were treated to a morning tea at Parliament hosted by Minister for Building and Construction, Hon Maurice Williamson.

The competition is a joint initiative by Carters, the Registered Master Builders Federation, the BCITO and the Department. It is open to carpentry apprentices under 26 years of age who have completed at least two years of their National Certificate in Carpentry, and is proving an excellent way to support the development of better skills, standards and professional behaviour across the sector.



**Winning apprentices:** Third place getter Justin Clark (left), winner Nathan Biggs (centre) and runner-up Shayne Dickinson (right).

## Building Act review under way

### WHAT IS HAPPENING?

**The Building Act 2004 (the Act) is being reviewed as part of the Government's regulatory reform programme.**

The Review aims to ensure the regulatory environment for building and housing is efficient and effective, provides for public safety and delivers good quality homes and buildings.

It will look at ways to enhance building controls by removing regulation that adds cost for little benefit, streamlining existing rules and providing incentives for building practitioners to lift performance.

The Review will also look at other longer-term issues around improving the allocation of risk and liability, and the greater use of insurance/warranty products to better manage risk.

At an event announcing the Review in August, the Minister for Building and Construction, Hon Maurice Williamson, told industry representatives that 'together we can make a real difference to lifting the performance of a sector which touches the lives of every New Zealander. If we get it right, this sector will live up to its promise and make a stronger contribution to building a more productive economy'.

### WHEN IS IT HAPPENING?

Work is already under way to identify opportunities to streamline or simplify the Act. This work is to be completed by the end of the year. A number of these changes are likely to require amendments to the Act in 2010.

### WHO IS INVOLVED?

The Department of Building and Housing is leading the review. To ensure the sector's issues are being addressed, the Department is working with a group of representatives from local government, the building and construction sector and consumers. Where appropriate, other smaller groups will be set up to provide more detailed input. These groups will help the Department shape the options that the public and industry will be invited to consider and comment on in early 2010.

### Have your say

Your views and ideas are welcome. Your main opportunity is in response to the consultation document due in early 2010. You will also be able to make submissions through the Select Committee stage.

If you wish to put forward your views or ideas in the interim, email your suggestions to [buildingactreview@dbh.govt.nz](mailto:buildingactreview@dbh.govt.nz), or write to The Building Act Review Team, PO Box 10 729, Wellington.

# Weather-tightness remediation needs a consent

Building consent authorities and building owners are reminded that a building consent is always needed for repairs where a building (or one of its parts) has failed to satisfy the Building Code durability provisions (including, for example, through a failure to comply with the external moisture requirements). Only normal maintenance is exempt from this requirement.

Obtaining a building consent for weathertightness remediation will help ensure the work is done properly and a durable solution is achieved.

## Highlights in a challenging year

Highlights noted in the Department's 2008/09 Annual Report include progress on new building laws that will benefit industry and consumers, and significant steps in licensing builders, in how leaky homes are handled, and in delivering smarter tenancy services.

Released in October, the report covered a year described as very challenging for the Department, and for the building and housing sector.

Key achievements include the following.

- The Building Amendment Act was enacted, with the following changes due early next year once the relevant regulations are approved:
  - national multi-use approvals, which will fast-track the consent process for group home builders who build homes on sites across the country using the same, or similar, designs
  - a new streamlined process for minor variations to building plans after building consent – this will save time for applicants and councils
  - voluntary project information memorandum from 1 February 2010.

- Continuing work on licensing builders to encourage professional skills.
- Reducing the operating costs of delivering services to the rental market, despite an increase in demand for services such as dispute resolution.
- Review of the approach to weathertightness.

The Department will also build on the \$3.171 million savings achieved during the year through its Value for Money Programme, with further savings planned for 2009/10. The full report is available at [www.dbh.govt.nz/annual-report-2008-09-1](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/annual-report-2008-09-1)



# Standards referenced in Compliance Documents to be updated

The Department is updating references to Standards and other documents which are cited in a number of Building Code Compliance Documents. These contain building methods that help designers, architects and builders ensure compliance with the Building Code.

We want to be sure the Compliance Documents are up-to-date and reflect latest practice. Everyone in the sector who is affected will have an opportunity to comment on the changes, and industry practitioners are urged to familiarise themselves with the proposals.

Information about the consultation and how to make a submission will be published on our website [www.dbh.govt.nz/consulting-on](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/consulting-on) when the consultation is released before the end of the year. The release will also be announced directly by the electronic newsletter *BC Update* - register to receive a copy at [www.dbh.govt.nz/bc-update-index](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/bc-update-index).

## THE PROPOSALS BEING CONSULTED ON ARE:

**B1 Structure.** Consulting on one new Standard; and changes to 18 updated Standards applying to: B1/VM1, B1/AS1, B1/AS2, B1/AS3 and B1/VM4. The new Standard covers the design of concrete tanks. The significant updated Standards cover the design of concrete structures and steel structures. These updates reflect the consequential impacts of the loadings code (AS/NZS 1170)

which was cited in Compliance Document B1 and became effective in November 2008. Updated design Standards allow for the use of new technology and new materials Standards.

**B2 Durability.** Consulting on two updated Standards for the durability of concrete structures and solid plastering. The changes apply to B2/AS1. These updates are required for consistency between Compliance Documents (where the Standard is proposed in another Compliance Document), and to reflect use of new construction materials.

**C Fire Safety.** Consulting on two updated Standards through proposed changes to C/AS1. The Standards cover automatic fire sprinkler systems and fire hydrant systems for buildings. These updates reflect updated design Standards that allow for the use of new technology.

**E1 Surface Water.** Consulting on one new Standard, along with 10 deleted and 12 updated Standards. The new and revised Standards cover piping materials and jointing methods affecting E1/AS1. These updates allow for the use of new materials and design standards that allow for the use of new technology.

**G9 Electricity.** Consulting on one updated Standard relating to electrical installations in G9/AS1. This update is to ensure consistency with related legislation, to align with the Electricity Regulations.

**G10 Piped Services.** Consulting on two deleted and 13 updated Standards relating to piping materials and jointing methods and affecting G10/AS1. These updates allow for the use of new materials and industry practices.

**G11 Gas as an Energy Source.** Consulting on one updated Standard relating to gas installations in G11/AS1. This update is to ensure consistency with related legislation, to align with the Gas Regulations.

**G12 Water Supplies.** Consulting on 11 updated Standards covering piping materials and installation methods in G12/AS1. These updates allow for the use of new materials and industry practices.

**G13 Foul Water.** Consulting on two deleted and 12 updated Standards covering piping materials and installation methods in G13/AS1, G13/AS2 and G13/AS3. These updates allow for the use of new materials and industry practices.

**G14 Industrial Liquid Waste.** Consulting on 11 updated Standards covering piping materials in G14/VM1. These updates allow for the use of new materials and industry practices.

**G15 Solid Waste.** Consulting on one Standard for health-care waste management in G15/AS1. These updates accommodate the use of design standards that allow for the use of new technology.

# Evaluating building safety quickly after an emergency

**New guidelines will help territorial authorities prepare for, implement and manage the structural safety evaluation of buildings after major earthquakes and other disasters.**

Lessons from the 2007 Gisborne earthquake have led to significant enhancements in the guidelines on building safety after major earthquakes and other disasters. Providing rapid and authoritative decisions was shown to reduce anxiety among building owners, tenants and the public, and allowed an early return to economic activity.

The guidelines, which are also intended for engineers and others who assist in the field, are based on a previous New Zealand Society for Earthquake Engineering (NZSEE) document adapted from the United States model. NZSEE has further developed them with support from the Department of Building and Housing and the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management.

Building and Construction Minister, Hon Maurice Williamson, has commended the cross-agency collaboration as 'a great example of those with the expertise working in partnership with central and local government to reduce the impact of an earthquake or other emergency on our communities'.

The Minister is encouraging all territorial authorities and regional civil defence groups to adopt the guidelines, which he says will reduce the danger to citizens from building damage and allow communities to recover more quickly from the devastating effects of an earthquake.

Training modules have been developed and the Otago, Canterbury and Wellington councils and civil defence groups have already engaged NZSEE to deliver training to their staff. Other regions are encouraged to do the same as this training will promote a greater response capability and a more uniform approach to help in a national response to disasters.

The recent earthquakes and tsunamis in the Pacific and Sumatra are a timely reminder of the need to be ready to respond quickly. The *Building Safety Evaluation Guidelines* are available on the Department's website – [www.dbh.govt.nz/bofficials-building-safety-evaluation](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/bofficials-building-safety-evaluation)

# Installation o

**Guidance for domestic fire sprinkler designers, homeowners and building consent authorities (BCAs) when working through the building consent process for the installation of domestic fire sprinklers.**

Homeowners who wish to voluntarily install fire sprinklers in their houses can refer to a Standard researched and developed by the New Zealand Fire Service, in conjunction with BRANZ, NZS 4517 Fire Sprinkler Systems for Houses.

Other means of compliance could also be used such as NFPA 13D Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems in One- and Two-Family Dwellings and Manufactured Homes.

Although a requirement to install smoke alarms in houses was introduced in 2003, it is not a Building Code requirement to install domestic fire sprinklers. However, the Fire Service is promoting their installation to reduce injuries and loss of life caused by fire.

Homeowners who choose to have sprinklers installed need to know what the building consent requirements are. The following table sets out the responsibilities for designers, installers, homeowners and BCAs.

# f fire sprinklers in houses promoted

	RESPONSIBILITIES		
	Designer and installer	Homeowner	BCA
<b>General</b>	Design, installation and commissioning to NZS 4517	The system is designed and installed correctly. Obtain a building consent for the building work required	A building consent application should contain the associated building work from this table
<b>Pipe installation through the external envelope</b>	Detail penetrations for the building consent	Include in building consent application	Check as part of the building consent processing
<b>Backflow protection</b>	Detail the type and location of the backflow preventer, if one is required	Include in building consent application	Check as part of the building consent processing
<b>Structure</b>	Detail the sprinkler pipe penetrations through structural frames, to NZS 3604 or alternative design, if they exist	Include in building consent application	Check as part of the building consent processing
<b>Durability</b>	Include consideration of the building work's durability in the building consent application	Include in building consent application	Check as part of the building consent processing, including the test frequency of any backflow preventer detailed in the plan and specifications
<b>Water flow characteristics</b>	Required for an effective fire sprinkler system to NZS 4517	Engage designer	Not required as part of the building consent
<b>Sprinkler head locations</b>	Required for an effective fire sprinkler system	Engage designer	Not required as part of the building consent
<b>Installation and commissioning</b>	Installation and commissioning to NZS 4517	Engage installer. Installer to issue to the owner details of the installation, commissioning and testing	Test certificate for any backflow preventer required before issuing CCC
<b>Testing and maintenance</b>	To be detailed for the owner	Owner or contractor to undertake regular testing Engage contractor to test the backflow preventer, if one is installed	Not required as part of the building consent, except for the ongoing testing of the backflow preventer (see Durability above)

BCAs need to know all of the following information before issuing the building consent.

- The building work associated with the fire sprinkler system complies with B1 Structure, B2 Durability and G12 Water Supplies.
- The appropriate level of backflow prevention, if required, has been identified and specified for installation, including the testing frequency.
- The backflow preventer, if required, will be installed and tested. This will probably be done by the installer, who will provide a backflow preventer test certificate.

- The name of the craftsman plumber doing the installation of potable water pipework or the connection to the potable water supply.

Homeowners will also find the following information about fire sprinkler systems helpful, although it is not required as part of the building consent process.

- There is adequate pressure and flow; and this should be done by inspection, test or producer statement.
- The design is to NZS 4517 and will probably be demonstrated by a design producer statement (Appendix G of NZS 4517).

- The installation has been installed and commissioned in accordance with NZS 4517 Appendix C Test water supply, Appendix F Verification flow test and Commissioning in accordance with Section 8, and this will probably be demonstrated by a design and construction producer statement (Appendix G of NZS 4517).
- The owner is aware of the testing and maintenance requirements (Appendix I of NZS 4517), including the testing of any backflow preventer.

# Well-sealed shower penetrations prevent water damage

Guidance for homeowners, designers, builders and building consent authorities on preventing water damage from inadequately sealed shower penetrations.

Repairs to walls and floors as a result of water damage from showers cost building owners and the insurance industry millions of dollars each year.

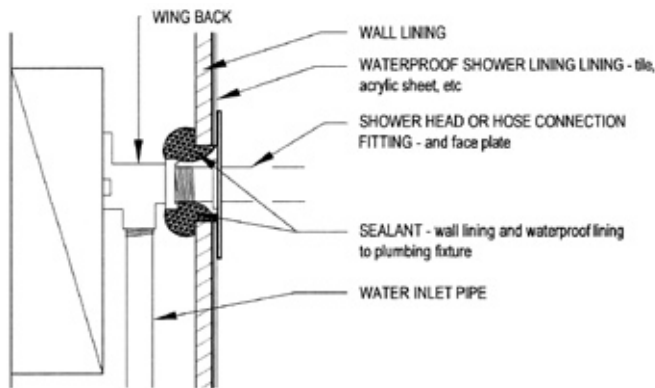
Building Code Clause E3 Internal Moisture requires that water splash is prevented from getting behind linings and into concealed spaces.

The solution in the associated Compliance Document E3/AS1 is to seal the joints around baths, basins, tubs and sinks so that water does not get into hidden building elements and damage them. One area requiring particular attention by designers and builders is where penetrations are made through the waterproof lining of showers.

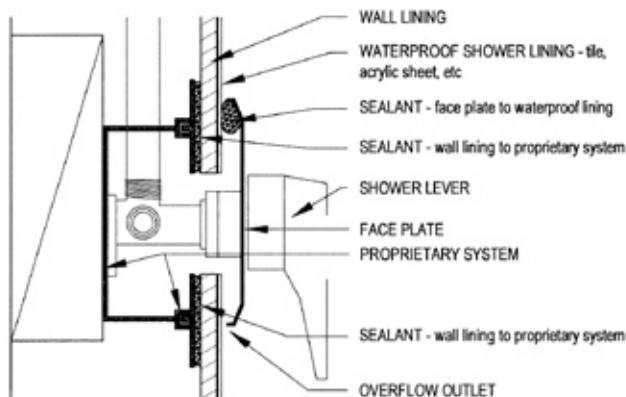
Because showers are subject to very significant water splash, penetrations in shower linings require particularly effective waterproofing. Showers range from proprietary single piece acrylic units to on-site constructed tiled-lined showers.

The penetrations for shower taps or mixing valves, roses or flexible hoses should be waterproofed with a proprietary system, or sealant compatible with all adjacent building elements. The diagram opposite shows how this could be done using sealant or a proprietary flange system around the penetration. No matter what system is used, the waterproofing must allow for easy access when replacing tap washers, ceramic disks and o-rings.

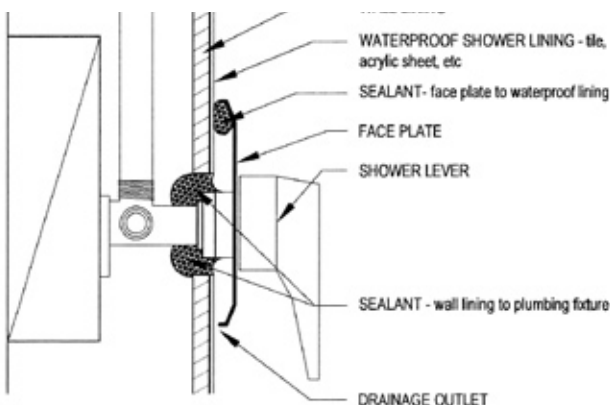
## EXAMPLES FOR WATERPROOFING THROUGH SHOWER WALLS



A) Shower Head or Flexible Hose Connection



B) Shower Mixer with Proprietary System (Example only)



B) Shower Mixer using Sealant

# Maintaining passive fire protection systems

The Department has recently written to all managers of building consent authorities (BCAs) about passive fire protection (PFP). This was part of the response to recommendations in the Fire Protection Association report *Determining Barriers to Industry Delivery of Fire Safe Buildings in New Zealand* (for a copy see [www.fireprotection.org.nz/publications/FPANZ\\_research\\_report.pdf](http://www.fireprotection.org.nz/publications/FPANZ_research_report.pdf)).

Both passive and active fire protection are important to the fire safety performance of a building. PFP must be inspected and maintained if it is a specified system and appears on a compliance schedule.

An August 2008 *Codewords* article described the inclusion of PFP systems on compliance schedules (see [www.dbh.govt.nz/codewords-30-4](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/codewords-30-4)).

As best practice for new building consents, the Department recommends PFP that forms part of the means of escape be identified on plans included with a draft compliance schedule. The final plan of PFP can then be included with the issued compliance schedule following the issue of the code compliance certificate.

BCAs can assist with this practice by writing to independent qualified persons (IQPs) and building owners close to the time of the building warrant of fitness anniversary to remind them about the importance of PFP.

Information that BCAs can provide to IQPs and building owners was included with the recent correspondence to BCA managers.

If changes to a compliance schedule are necessary, these should be applied for using Form 11 (application for amendment to compliance schedule). This will provide a phased-in approach to amending compliance schedules.

If a building has defective PFP, then the defect should be corrected by maintenance and repair so the building can comply with the Building Code and Building Act 2004.

Further information and guidance is available in the Compliance Schedule Handbook. Another good resource is the *Building Owners Building Warrant of Fitness Manual* (available from [www.bnets.co.nz/BWOFs/index.htm](http://www.bnets.co.nz/BWOFs/index.htm)).

If you would like to clarify any aspect of passive fire protection or discuss the report's findings, please contact Nick Saunders on 0800 242 243. Peter Sparrow can also assist with queries about compliance schedules, and can be contacted on the same phone number.

## Early Childhood Education Centres and Building Code compliance

Guidance for the owners, designers and builders of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECE) Centres and building consent authorities about building work associated with the centres is now available on the Department's website.

When owners are constructing or altering ECE Centres they need to ensure that both the Building Act 2004 and Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 requirements are met.

The Department has been working with the Ministry of Education to assist the centres through the building consent process during construction and alteration.

See [www.dbh.govt.nz/bc-ece-centres](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/bc-ece-centres) for the guidance details.

# Design guidance for barriers

Structural engineers, building designers, manufacturers and building consent authorities (BCAs) who are involved in the design, manufacture, installation and assessment of barriers will find the Department's recently published 'Practice Advisory 10 – Design Guidance for Barriers' helpful.

Barriers need to comply with Clauses B1, B2, F2 and F4 of the Building Code. In demonstrating Code compliance to a BCA, designers and manufacturers will need to provide sufficient supporting technical data. Examples include full details of the system together with one or more of the following.

- Design calculations. Some barrier systems are relatively complex which makes design by means of standard calculations difficult. Either computer analysis (such as finite element analysis) or testing may be required to demonstrate compliance. This is often the case with some types of glass barrier systems. Where design calculations are provided, the analysis and design information may include the loads applied at ultimate and serviceability limit states, the design actions, member capacities and calculated deflections.

- Test results demonstrating compliance with the Building Code or relevant Compliance Documents.
- Other information such as detailed product literature and design tables such as the balustrade design tables produced by the Glass Association of New Zealand.

It is important to note that the suitability and strength of the structure supporting the barrier, for example the floor or deck to which the barrier is connected, also needs to be designed and assessed for Building Code compliance.

The designer or manufacturer may wish to provide a producer statement from a suitably qualified engineer claiming compliance with the relevant Building Code clauses as further evidence for the BCA to consider.

For a copy of the Practice Advisory see [www.dbh.govt.nz/guidance-information](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/guidance-information)

# Determination Reuse of existing

This determination arose from a dispute between the building consent authority (BCA) and a homeowner about whether the existing barriers to a deck and a walkway adjacent to remedial cladding work could be reused in their present form. The BCA refused to issue a building consent for the house that included the reuse of the existing barriers. The owner applied for the determination.

## BACKGROUND

The house was built in 1990. The building work was for the partial re-cladding of the house and involved the removal, minor alteration, and re-fixing of two stainless steel barriers immediately adjacent to the re-cladding. The barriers had widely spaced balusters with no infill between and there were other similar barriers used elsewhere in the house. The requirements of the Building Code for barriers to restrict the passage of children under six did not come into effect until December 1994.

The owner queried whether the reuse of the barriers constituted building work and, if so, whether section 112 of the Building Act 2004 applied to such work.

The BCA was of the opinion that as the barriers were to be modified, section 112 did not apply, and that the barriers should be modified to reduce the size of the openings, in order to comply with the current requirements of the Building Code.

# n 2009/60: ting barriers for a house

## DISCUSSION

Section 112 says that a BCA must not grant a consent for the alteration of an existing building, unless after the alteration the building will comply as nearly as is reasonably practicable with the Building Code with respect to means of escape from fire and access and facilities for persons with disabilities, but that it must continue to comply with the other provisions of the Building Code to at least the same extent as before the alteration.

As the building work was for work in a detached dwelling, while the provisions for means of escape from fire applied in terms of section 112 (in this instance with respect to the provision of smoke alarms), the provisions for access and facilities for persons with disabilities did not.

The determination considered that the re-cladding work must comply fully with the requirements of the Building Code. It was inappropriate to apply section 112 to the re-cladding work because, if section 112 was applied, it could be argued that the re-cladding work need only meet the requirements of the Building Code to the same extent as the defective elements being replaced.

The determination took the view that section 112 should be applied to the whole building as altered, which in this instance included the barriers themselves. It was determined that the deck barriers could be reinstalled in their current form for the following reasons.

- The barriers were incidental to the remedial work being undertaken.
- The barriers themselves were subject to only minor alterations.
- The barriers were to be reinstated in exactly the same location as before.
- The barriers were Code-compliant to the same extent as before the alteration.
- The decks themselves were not to be altered or extended.

Although it was found that the barriers could be re-installed in their present form, it was strongly suggested that the applicant take steps to improve their safety features.

Determination 2008/4 dealt with a similar situation involving barriers to a bridge that was being widened, but which required the barriers to the bridge to be modified. Determination 2009/60 did not consider the outcome of the earlier determination was relevant because the bridge barriers were an integral part of the work to widen the bridge.

## THE DECISION

The determination reversed the decision of the BCA to refuse to issue the building consent.

**These are summaries only.  
The full determinations  
(along with all other  
determinations issued)  
can be viewed on our website:  
 [www.dbh.govt.nz/  
determinations](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/determinations)**

# Benefits of the Department's Technical Reviews

An update of the Department's technical reviews, some key findings, and how local authorities and the building industry can benefit is now available on the Department's website.

A technical review is the Department's formal assessment of territorial authorities' performance of their building control functions. The Department encourages all TAs to adopt the best-practice advice and recommendations found in the review reports.

The latest update outlines the focus of recent reviews, and explains the reviews' history and legal framework. It is available at [www.dbh.govt.nz/technical-reviews#2008-09-summary](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/technical-reviews#2008-09-summary)

## Learning curve

### **BUILDING ACT AND COMPLIANCE TRAINING**

The training consultancy Building Networks, which specialises in compliance training, is running the following one-day workshops early next year. Email [office@bnets.co.nz](mailto:office@bnets.co.nz) for further information.

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#### **Building Warrant of Fitness for Owners and Property Managers**

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17 Feb 2010 Auckland [www.bnets.co.nz](http://www.bnets.co.nz)

24 Feb 2010 Wellington [www.bnets.co.nz](http://www.bnets.co.nz)

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### **Legality of Department of Building and Housing interpretations**

Only the courts can issue binding interpretations of the Building Act 1991 and Building Act 2004 and Regulations. Indications and guidelines issued by the Department of Building and Housing, either in *Codewords* or other communications, are provided with the intention of helping people to understand the legislation. They are, however, offered on a 'no-liability' basis and, in any particular case, those concerned should consult their own legal advisors.

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