



Department of
Building and Housing
Te Tari Kaupapa Whare

licensing update

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Welcome

Welcome to the sixth issue of the Department of Building and Housing's *Licensing Update*, keeping you up to date on developments in the Licensed Building Practitioners Scheme.

In this issue we cover:

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- [More definition around the Site 3 licence](#)
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- [More licensing workshops](#)
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We also answer the interesting [questions you've been asking us](#) over the last couple of months. Please keep them coming.

The Scheme gets underway

As you all know, the Licensed Building Practitioners Scheme was officially launched on November 1. Since that time there has been a very high level of interest in the Scheme as a whole, and well over 7,000 [application packs](#) have been distributed to practitioners around the country.

This has been a great response, and the Department has had to urgently reprint a number of licence class forms as they have been so popular. So if you have had to wait a few days to receive your pack, this should explain why.

Remember; to request a pack, or to answer any questions you might have about filling out any of the forms, simply call the licensing team on 0800 60 60 50 or email info@dbh.govt.nz

More definition around the Site 3 licence

Over the past few weeks, the Licensing team have been taking a lot of calls from practitioners asking for more information about the Site 3 licence class, and what sort of work fits within the scope of the licence.

The following is a summary of what the Department considers to be the key elements of the Site 3 licence class. This summary is taken from a more detailed document that is available on the [Department website](#) that explains the key differences between the Site 2 and the Site 3 licence classes.

The Site 3 licence class is aimed predominantly at construction managers on large and/or highly complex buildings.

Summary

The management of construction of large and/or highly complex building project can be interpreted in the following way:

- Management of construction means the management responsibility for a project of sufficient size or complexity that it requires a project team managed by the Site 3 applicant, and technical supervisors who have technical responsibility for a defined part or parts of the project.
- It is not essential for a Site 3 applicant to have managed all aspects of the project contract or finances, or to have worked on the construction site 100% of the time.
- Large physical size is not the only identifier of a Site 3 building project.
- Large logistical demands are more likely to signify Site 3 building projects.
- The methodology used in the Building (Designation of Building Work Licence Classes) Order to describe design complexity of Category 3 buildings could be used as a guide for examples of Site 3 projects. This includes buildings of four levels or more, and/or buildings occupied by large numbers of people, and/or buildings that involve higher than usual risk, and/or buildings that have a high cultural or social significance. While these examples may offer some guidance, there is no direct correlation between Site 3 and Category 3 buildings, so this approach should not be relied upon as the sole criteria for selecting projects for a Site 3 licence class application.
- Other factors that may indicate complexity include location, timeframes, basements, ground conditions, unusual design features, restoration of historic buildings, and green star rated buildings.
- The logistical demands of managing a high value building project are more likely to signify Site 3 competencies.
- Examples of large or complex buildings need to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Changes to the annual licensing fee

The annual fee is the only fee that licensed practitioners must pay each year. It covers the costs associated with the Registrar's functions such as establishing and maintaining the Register and decisions about issuing, cancelling, or suspending licences. It also includes helping the Building Practitioners Board manage complaints and appeals, and providing other administrative support for the Building Practitioners Board.

In the first year of licensing this fee is \$170. However, from the second year of licensing it will be increased by \$25 as an additional levy will be included. This levy will cover the costs to operate and administer the Building Practitioners Board.

Licensing workshops

The first round of [licensing workshops](#), where the application forms were explained, along with tips on filling them in, have just been completed. The Department was able to host 33 workshops in a number of towns and cities around the country. There was a great response to these in all areas.

At a number of the workshops, we were also able to talk to practitioners about how they currently keep up with changes in the building industry and how much time they spend on doing this. Their feedback on how they think their skills should be maintained under the Scheme was very useful and it will be incorporated into the next Licensing update issue.

The workshops have now been put on hold until early in 2008, as December and January are traditionally a busy time of the year for the building industry, and for families.

So far, there are plans to visit a number of centres in the New Year, however final details of the venues and dates have not been confirmed.

In the meantime, we recommend you read the [Is Licensing for Me?](#) booklet to determine which licence class you might apply for.

Keeping up with skills maintenance

Each day the building industry changes, as new building materials and design technologies, and related legislation and codes are introduced or amended.

Current competence, or skills maintenance, is about staying on top of your game. Maintaining appropriate skills and knowledge will enable Licensed Building Practitioners to work more effectively, minimise errors, reduce costs and improve workplace safety.

To remain licensed, licensed building practitioners will be required to demonstrate their current competence. The Licensed Building Practitioner Scheme refers to this as 'skills maintenance'.

What is skills maintenance?

The skills maintenance programme for the Licensed Building Practitioner Scheme will offer a wide range of learning opportunities and activities to help you stay on top of your game. You will be able to choose the type and style of activities that best suit your needs and the requirements of your licence class(es).

Some of the benefits of skills maintenance will include:

- knowledge of current materials and practices
- career development and ongoing training
- continual development of work practices.

This should lead to:

- high quality and safe buildings
- greater consumer confidence.

The Department of Building and Housing and a range of industry and professional organisations are working together to ensure that skills maintenance is relevant for practitioners in all licence classes.

How will skills maintenance operate?

Each skills maintenance activity will have points associated with it. Generally, one point will equal one hour of skills maintenance activity, and limits are set for each type of activity. You can participate in skills maintenance activities as soon as you become licensed. Some activities can be done from your own home, such as regular reading of industry publications.

The Department will set an achievable points target during the initial stage of licensing as we recognise that there may not be enough activities available. The Registrar will encourage you to submit your points at the time of annual contact after your first year as a licensed practitioner, so they can see you are keeping up with the play. However, your competence will not be formally assessed until after your second year of holding your licence as it is a bi-annual process.

How can I earn points?

Once you are licensed, the Department will provide you with a list of activities that can contribute to your points' requirements. The list will show the maximum number of points you can claim for any particular activity.

Is skills maintenance a requirement?

Once you are licensed, skills maintenance is a requirement to ensure you stay on top of your

game. Remember: how you accumulate your points is your choice. However, if you don't do any skills maintenance you run the risk of losing your licence.

You will be kept informed through the *Licensing Update* e-newsletter, the Department website and through industry conferences and groups.

Should you have any further queries you can email info@dbh.govt.nz or phone 0800 60 60 50.

Questions and answers

The following are a selection of the questions that have been raised at the workshops we have been hosting around the country. There are more of these questions in the [frequently asked questions](#) section of the website.

What happens if I work in a situation where I only design a certain part of each structure, or where I only carry out a part of the design process? It seems to me that I may not have a wide enough range of experience to apply for any of the design licence classes.

We understand that some design practitioners specialise in one area of the design process. However, the Design licence classes reflect a broad range of competencies across design processes. It may be possible to choose examples from previous employment to show your range of skills and experience.

However if you have only worked in one practice, or specialised in one area, you may need to think about taking the next three years to broaden your range of skills and experience.

My current role involves controlling budgets and developing and managing building contracts on behalf of the building owner. Does this mean I should or can apply for a Site 3 licence?

From the way you describe your role, it sounds like you are a project manager.

The focus of the Site 3 licence is on the management of the construction of large and/or complex buildings. A good example of these would be a hospital or a stadium.

The Site 3 licence holder controls and directs construction through a project team. This project team report to the Site 3 on their work, and that person will be managing the entire construction phase. This is different from the work you have described.

More details on the scope of the Site 3 licence can be read on the [website](#).

How do I progress from one licence class to another, eg from Design 1 to Design 2?

The Department is currently exploring a number of possible options that could allow a practitioner to gain the project experience to apply for another design licence, including:

- being mentored by another designer holding the licence you want to gain
- gaining mentoring support through a design industry group
- further training or study
- developing a collaborative approach with other designers with a project in the building category you are looking for experience in.

These options have yet to be formalised and a definitive means of moving from one design licence class to another is yet to be established.

I note that your guideline notes state that a referee cannot be a family member. However I work for a family company and for one of my projects, the best referee is a family member. What can I do in this case?

At the time the guidance material was prepared, the Department had not appreciated that some applicants would need family members to be referees. While our preference is to not use family members, in some circumstances it may be acceptable.

If you use a family member as a referee, you must declare it on the referee form, so the assessor is aware of this.

Does the scope of a Site 3 license include overseeing the construction of straightforward houses and smaller scale commercial building work; i.e. the sorts of work that a Site 1 and Site 2 licensed person would do?

The focus of the Site 2 and Site 3 licences are different from each other. The focus of the Site 3 licence class is on construction management of large and/or highly complex buildings. The focus of the Site 2 class is on technically coordinating the building site.

Therefore a Site 3 licence holder would not automatically oversee residential work for example, because the competencies are different. Having said that, some Site 3 licence holders who have come up through the ranks may have good technical knowledge and might be quite capable of providing the technical oversight on smaller commercial and residential buildings.

Note: If you hold a Site 2 licence, this allows you to oversee all the work of the Site 1 licence class as well.

If I apply for another licence class a year after I have been issued my first licence, do I apply again from scratch?

Yes. You will need to apply using both the application form (which verifies your identity) and the licence class form, which provides the evidence of your experience, skills and

knowledge. The assessor requires this information to be able to make an assessment of your competence.

Can I still apply to be licensed if the projects I want to use in my application are more than 3 years old?

Yes. We would prefer that at least one of the projects you choose to use in your application is from the last 2-3 years. However, if your projects are older, these may also be used. The assessors will determine each application on a case by case basis and will therefore consider older projects where they clearly relate to the licence class you are applying for.

I have recently been contracted to design an additional classroom for a school. What level of Design licence should I apply for if I am designing this work?

You should read the [Understanding the building categories](#) booklet closely to determine what category of building any of your work falls into.

The building categories are based on four major criteria. These are structure, use (including importance level, intended use and occupant numbers), risk score and status under the Historic Places Act.

The importance level is based on Standard AS 1170 which gives examples of buildings that fall into five different levels. You can find a copy of this table in the [Understanding the building categories for the Licensed Building Practitioners Scheme](#) booklet.

An individual classroom would not be in importance level 3 as it is designed for less than 250 occupants. Therefore a Design 2 licence would be appropriate for this type of work. However, a classroom that was an addition to a block might be importance level 3 because the whole block could be occupied by more than 250 people.

I have been asked to be a referee for someone. I was wondering if you have any guidance for me on my role.

When you act as a referee for an applicant for the Licensed Building Practitioners Scheme, you are being asked to comment on an applicants work and competence on a specific design or building project.

Therefore, anyone who acts as a referee, or who agrees to provide a reference will need to ensure that any comment or reference they make is true, accurate and fair. This includes written and verbal references.

Referees are expected to provide an accurate impression of the applicant, and it is in their best interests to do so.

For online services, and previous versions of Licensing update, visit our website www.dbh.govt.nz. To ask a question or get more information, call us on 0800 60 60 50 or email info@dbh.govt.nz.

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