

Overview of proposed changes to the 2019 National Construction Code

What it means for growers



TOOLBOX

GREENHOUSE CONSTRUCTION AND SAFE OPERATION

Overview

The National Construction Code (NCC) is a uniform set of technical provisions for the design and construction of buildings and other structures throughout Australia. Each building type is arranged into 'classifications' and the NCC allows for variations in what to build based on size, height, climate and geological or geographic conditions. The NCC has three volumes with the main differences being:

- Volume 1 contains the requirements for Class 2 to 9 (multi-residential, commercial, industrial and public) buildings and structures
- Volume 2 contains the requirements for Class 1 (residential) and Class 10 (non-habitable) buildings and structures
- Volume 3 is the National Plumbing Code.

Driver for change

Australia does not have a unified building classification of horticultural buildings within the NCC. This means that greenhouses or grow structures can be classified under the sometimes onerous and inappropriate classification of Class 7 or Class 8 within the NCC.

In order to better meet growers' needs and to ensure the protected cropping industry can continue to develop sustainably, Horticulture Innovation Australia has commissioned a project to propose changes to the NCC in 2019.

A nationwide survey of greenhouse growers was undertaken by the project team that determined, among other findings, that 65% of the respondents consider 'understanding the preparation, lodgement, assessment and approval process with local government' as the most pressing issue.

Changes to the current NCC would assist in creating certainty in the assessment and approval processes while also encouraging further development of the protected cropping industry.

Summary of changes

The proposed changes to the NCC in 2019 and the implications for growers and service providers is outlined on the next page.

KEY MESSAGES

- The National Construction Code (NCC) is a uniform set of technical provisions for the design and construction of buildings in Australia
- To better meet industry and growers' needs there are proposed changes to the NCC in 2019
- Changes are being proposed to address priority industry issues identified during recent national consultation
- The proposed changes relate to definitions and verification methods for intensive horticultural buildings
- The changes cover both Volume 1 and Volume 2 of the NCC



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#	AREA	PROPOSED CHANGE
VOLUME 1		
1	Redefine Farm Building	It is proposed that farm building definitions shall be revised to include Intensive Horticultural Buildings (IHB) as is provided within the Classification Definitions category on pages 4-6 of this document. This option retains the farm building definitions and incorporates the IHB definitions. An IHB shall be classified as either a Group A, B or C structure. <i>NCC Change Location: NCC Vol 1 2016 > A1 Interpretation > Part A1.1 Definition > Farm building (REVISED)</i>
2	Provide Definition for Intensive Horticulture Building	This proposed change adds a definition into the NCC Volumes One and Two for intensive horticulture buildings which specifies the building's primary usage for horticultural means. An IHB is a greenhouse, grow structure, canopy or the like belonging to one or a combination of the aforementioned in NCC Volume One, Part A1.1, Farm Buildings. <i>NCC Change Location: NCC Vol 1 2016 > A1 Interpretation > Part A1.1 Definition > Intensive horticulture building (NEW)</i>
3	Alteration to Part H3 Farm Buildings and Farm Sheds	To be added to NCC Vol 1 Part H3. This allows for inclusion of the Intensive Horticultural Building into Part H3 of the NCC – here specific deemed-to-satisfy provisions for each identified classification of Intensive Horticultural Building will be documented. <i>NCC Change Location: NCC Vol 1 2016 > Part H3 Farm Buildings and Farm Sheds > Part H3.1 Application of parts (REVISED)</i>
VOLUME 2		
4	Part 1.1 Interpretation	An addition shall be made to Part 1.1.7 Language of Volume Two to include the classification Class 10d. <i>NCC Change Location: NCC Vol 2 2016 > Part 1.1 Interpretation > Part 1.1.7 Language (REVISED)</i>
5	Part 1.1 Interpretation	This proposed change adds a definition into the NCC for intensive horticulture buildings which specifies the building's primary usage for horticultural means. <i>NCC Change Location: NCC Vol 2 2016 > Part 1.1 Interpretation > Part 1.1.1 Definitions > Intensive horticulture building (NEW)</i>
6	Part 1.3 Classification	An addition shall be made to Class 10 at Part 1.3 Section 1.3.2 Classification whereby a subclass 10d shall be added. This allows for inclusion of the Group C Intensive Horticultural Building into Volume Two of the NCC. An explanatory information note has also been included in this part. <i>NCC Change Location: NCC Vol 2 2016 > Part 1.3 Classification > Part 1.3.2 Classification > Class 10 (REVISED/ ADDITION)</i>
7	Part 1.3 Classification	An addition shall be made to Class 10 at Part 1.3 Section 1.3.3 Multiple classifications whereby a subclass 10d shall be added. This allows for inclusion of the Group C Intensive Horticultural Building into Volume Two of the NCC for multiple classification applications. <i>NCC Change Location: NCC Vol 2 2016 > Part 1.3 Classification > Part 1.3.3 Multiple Classifications (REVISED)</i>
8	Part 2.3 Fire Safety	An alteration shall be made to Part 2.3 Fire Safety to ensure a Class 10d building does not significantly increase the risk of fire spread between Class 2 to 9 buildings. <i>NCC Change Location: NCC Vol 2 2016 > Part 2.3 Fire Safety > Part 2.3.1 Protection from the spread of fire (REVISED)</i>
9	Part 2.3 Fire Safety	An explanatory information note has been included in Part 2.3 Fire Safety which outlines specification for Class 10d structures. <i>NCC Change Location: NCC Vol 2 2016 > Part 2.3 Fire Safety > Explanatory information (REVISED/ADDITION)</i>





IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO ASK

- How do the proposed changes to the NCC relate to my current greenhouse or proposed new development?
- Is my local government planner aware of the proposed changes to cover intensive horticulture buildings?
- Have I sought guidance from my local government and a professional engineer as to how these changes may affect my greenhouse development?
- Do I need to change anything in relation to my current greenhouse?

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Australian Building Codes Board (2016) National Construction Code 2016; Volume 1; Building Code of Australia; Class 2 to Class 9 Buildings, Commonwealth of Australia and States and Territories of Australia

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