

28 January 2020

NSW Legislative Council  
Public Accountability Committee

### **INQUIRY INTO REGULATION OF BUILDING STANDARDS, BUILDING QUALITY AND BUILDING DISPUTES- QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

We refer to the questions on notice as raised with Chris Duggan, President Strata Community Association NSW, at the Inquiry on 11 December 2019 and provide the following additional information as requested by the Committee.

Please note we have referred the questions on notice to technical experts for assistance in responding to the issues raised at the Inquiry.

#### **Compliance with Australian Standard 5113**

Very few ACP products (especially older products - pre 2014) will pass a 1530.1 combustibility test or 5113 full scale wall test. Both tests are difficult/impractical to conduct on established buildings.

Although a '1530.1 indicative test' can be conducted using a 50mm core sample from the façade. This simply gives an indicative result as to whether the product will pass a full 1530.1 combustibility test. The above tests do not determine polymer (PE) content.

Current NSW legislation determines that any product over 30% Polymer (PE) is non-compliant and must be removed. This doesn't mean that products under 30% are non-combustible.

Most ACP is flammable/combustible with varying degrees of combustibility primarily based off their polymer content. As stated previously the 1530.1 and 5113 tests do not determine polymer content.

The most practical method to determine the percentage of polymer in the ACP is through a Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR analysis) and an ASTM D5630 (Ash test). A 50mm core sample of the ACP is sufficient to conduct an FTIR analysis and ASTM D5630 test and a Polymer (PE) percentage can be determined.

#### **Record product testing and non-ACP products**

The short answer is 'Yes', additional testing may be required should further products be determined as non-compliant. When conducting external wall assessments best practice testing involves the use of the NCC 2019 to determine whether a product is compliant. Ideally all products that were deemed at time of inspection to be combustible were tested, reviewed and recorded-

however this may not have occurred in cases where desktop testing, product specification or limited on site testing was conducted.

Although timber-based products didn't fall into scope in relation to the NSW Government product ban it was determined that wood-based products by its very nature is combustible and therefore non-compliant with the NCC2019.

There is 0% polymer in most wood composite products, but they are highly flammable. This means legislation based solely around 30% polymer is limited. This allows for highly combustible wood core ACP's (phenolic resin) and various timber composite products to remain compliant in relation to the NSW Governments product ban.

We thank the Public Accountability Committee for the opportunity to provide follow up information to the Inquiry.

Your sincerely

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