

**INQUIRY INTO FURTHER INQUIRY INTO THE  
REGULATION OF BUILDING STANDARDS**

**Organisation:** Standards Australia

**Date Received:** 29 August 2021

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Good evening

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the further inquiry into the regulation of building standards. We have responded only to matters relevant to our work as Australia's peak standards development body and developers of standards used in the building and construction sector. In particular, we have not commented on the arrangements that exist for the certification of building projects, such matters being beyond our field of expertise.

As Australia's national standards body, we work with industry, government, and the community to develop and adopt standards through an open process of consultation and consensus. We are responsible for overseeing the development of Australian Standards and adopting International Standards through ISO and IEC, which can provide solutions across the supply chain from product manufacturing, the design process and construction.

We are not responsible for the certification of building projects, products or systems. We work closely with building, electrical, plumbing and gas sector industry and government representatives. We seek to ensure that Australian Standards are maintained to support Australian industry and to meet community expectations.

Many Australian Standards are referenced as 'deemed-to-satisfy' solutions in the Australian National Construction Code, a Code developed through a National Cabinet process supported by the Commonwealth and state and territory governments and industry.

These standards

- Are developed by industry, government and community interests to meet the needs of the Australian community;
- Support the National Construction Code as 'Deemed-to-Satisfy' solutions that meet the performance requirements of the NCC;
- Support the needs of other regulatory regimes outside of the Australian Building Codes Board process, including as example in the areas of electrical and gas safety;
- Are internationally aligned and developed following Australia's obligations under the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement.

In developing these standards, we work with the state and territory building regulators to ensure the documents we produce are fit for purpose through the Australian Building Codes Board process.

Regarding cladding specifically, we maintain several product standards (that deal with particular types of products) and, as relevantly, standards for testing products and systems concerning the risk of fire spread. In particular, the AS-1530 series sets out procedures for the testing of building products. AS 5113-2016 Fire propagation testing and classification of external walls of buildings provide a testing methodology for large scale wall systems related to the tendency of fire to spread.

We also developed a technical specification SA TS 5344:2019, Permanent labelling for Aluminium Composite Panel (ACP) products, which provides minimum requirements for marking ACPs, to enable their identification throughout a product's life. This project intended to improve the ability of consumers and building practitioners to identify ACP-type products, and as a result, to reduce the possibility of product substitution that can result in the wrong product being supplied and installed.

Australian Standards and building codes are kept up to date through a robust process that involves industry, governments and the community. We believe that this process is the right one for standards-setting in the sector.

Standards Australia acknowledges several inquiries that have been commissioned to look at the operation of the building and construction sector. In particular, the Shergold Weir report looked at a wide range of issues and provided several recommendations in respect of the broader issue.

As a final matter, Standards Australia is working through a whole of business transformation regarding how our content is accessed. We are working directly with industry in making our content more accessible, both in respect of how it is used, including digitally, how it is purchased. Additionally, we are developing a portal that will allow Australian Standards to be accessed for personal, domestic and household use at no cost.

We would be pleased to provide any further advice to the inquiry as appropriate.

Yours sincerely

Adam Stingemore