

### Guideline correction

In the January *Guideline*, we stated that the maximum permitted area for the construction, alteration or removal of any fabric, glass or metal awning on any building without requiring a building consent was 50 m<sup>2</sup>. **This is incorrect and the maximum area should read 20 m<sup>2</sup>** (previously 15 m<sup>2</sup>). Our apologies for this error.

### Internet forums

There is a wealth of good building-related information on the internet, but there is also a significant amount of information that needs to be used with caution, particularly that submitted to building-related forums. Users of such sites need to be sure that the information given is:

- applicable to New Zealand climate, building practices and materials – it is common to see advice given based on overseas research, information and building practices that are not applicable to New Zealand conditions
- from an identifiable reputable source – is the published information able to be substantiated or is it unsubstantiated opinion?

### Consent documentation quality

In 2010, BRANZ ran a seminar called *Are we there yet?*, which looked at the changes the industry has had to cope with and how well we have adapted to those changes. The general consensus was that we had come a long way but we hadn't quite got to where we should be. There were still elements of design and construction that were not being done as well as they could be – one area being the quality of documentation.

This has been illustrated recently when reading a 2009 DBH determination regarding the non-issuance of a building consent for the documentation submitted. In this case, the DBH commissioned an expert registered architect to assess the drawings provided for consent for compliance with clauses E2 and B2. In summary, the expert said that, amongst other things, documents submitted did not:

- include a risk matrix assessment
- identify wind and corrosion zones
- provide bracing calculations and show location of bracing
- provide evidence of compliance against E2 for elements that were alternative methods
- clearly identify the cladding type(s) or where and how the cladding was to be installed.

The expert concluded that the documentation did not provide adequate information to satisfy the requirements of Section 49 of the Building Act and that the BCA was correct in refusing to issue a building consent.

The outcome of the determination endorsed the view of the expert in terms of B2 and E2 compliance that insufficient information was submitted and the BCA was correct in refusing to issue a building consent. The determination also found fault in the level of information provided with respect to compliance with clauses B1, E1 and H1.

It is disappointing that all the omissions listed above have been required with a consent application since 2005 at the latest (many much earlier than that), and there are still many instances where insufficient consent documentation is provided.

### Out of print BRANZ information

BRANZ occasionally receives requests for copies of superseded publications. BRANZ does not retain stocks of these publications for sale. Out of print material may be available from the National Library and some public libraries. It may also be viewed in person at the BRANZ library. However, current extensive renovations at BRANZ mean that such access to the library will be restricted for some months.

### The weather factor

The weather has a significant impact on the performance of building materials both during and after construction. Recent weather events, particularly in Australia, have highlighted this.

To assist, these publications are available from BRANZ:

- Bulletin 455 *Restoring a house after flood damage* (available for free download)
- Bulletin 414 *Coping with climate change*
- Bulletin 425 *Finding leaks*
- Bulletin 321 *Reducing the impact of wind on building sites*

### The earthquake factor

Similarly, the Canterbury earthquake has highlighted a number of areas of concern such as liquefaction and stability of chimneys and unreinforced brick masonry.

The DBH has earthquake reconstruction information available on the web page [www.dbh.govt.nz/canterbury-earthquake](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/canterbury-earthquake) and has just released a report titled *Guidance on house repairs and reconstruction – a summary of geotechnical and structural engineering recommendations to guide house repairs and reconstruction* available for free download at [www.dbh.govt.nz/UserFiles/File/News/guide-canterbury-earthquake.pdf](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/UserFiles/File/News/guide-canterbury-earthquake.pdf).

BRANZ also has available:

- Bulletin 444 *Lessons from the 1987 Edgumbe earthquake*

- Study Report 100 *Repair and reinstatement of earthquake-damaged houses – derivation of repair techniques*
- Study Report 123 *Repair and reinstatement of earthquake-damaged houses – derivation of repair techniques – phase II*
- Study Report 158 *Repair and reinstatement of earthquake-damaged houses – derivation of repair techniques – phase III*
- Earthquake-prone buildings (*Build* 109).

### Follow the details

An architect has detailed a flashing to the junction between two cladding elements to deal with the conditions on a particularly exposed site and the BCA has consented it. The builder gave a copy of the drawing showing the flashing profile to the fabricator when he was asked to price. When flashings are delivered to site the builder checks the delivery – as all good builders should. He notices that the flashings differ from the drawing given to the fabricator. He calls the fabricator and is told: “You don’t need to do it that way – what we have supplied is the way we always do it and it will be fine.” Where to next?

In our view, the builder must instruct the flashing fabricator to come and retrieve the flashings supplied and provide correctly folded flashings as detailed – no argument. It is not the fabricator’s role to unilaterally decide what is best (in this case) and ignore the details supplied.

There are two issues arising from the fabricator’s actions:

1. The fabricator is contractually bound to supply what was detailed – by not doing so, he is likely to be in breach of contract.
2. The change (if incorporated and not approved in advance by the BCA) may mean that a Code Compliance Certificate may not be issued, as the consented documents have not been followed.

### NZS 3604:2011 and Timber Treatment Seminar

Dates and venues for this important seminar should be finalised and available on our website later this week.

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**Guideline** is a free monthly update on building issues prepared by BRANZ and funded by the Building Research Levy.

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