

January 17, 2025

The Honourable Felix Ellis, Minister for Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs
House of Assembly, Parliament House
Hobart, TAS 7000

Dear Minister Ellis

RE: CONCERN OVER TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT'S DEFERRAL OF NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION CODE CHANGES

The Building Products Industry Council (BPIC) is significantly concerned with the Tasmanian Government's recent decision to defer proposed changes to the 2025 and 2028 National Construction Code (NCC) for up to six years. This broad-brush decision is seen to undermine Tasmania's economy, be out of sync with other States and Territories NCC adoption, diminishes confidence in your State's building regulatory framework, and is unlikely to significantly decrease building costs as intended.

One of BPIC's core policies is national regulatory consistency. Deferring critical NCC updates without comprehensive consultation disregards the principles of the Tasmanian Legislation Review Program, which mandates a full Regulatory Impact Analysis, and contradicts Tasmania's commitment to national harmonisation of building regulations. We appreciate housing affordability concerns, but see the issue as a complicated and multifaceted one that will need a suite of positive policy and operational responses to rectify. This blanket deferral decision will have significant and lasting consequences, which include:

- **Housing Quality and Costs:** Tasmanians will be left with substandard housing that lacks energy efficiency, resilience, and thermal comfort, increasing living costs for homeowners and renters now and into the future.
- **Economic Isolation:** The deferment creates a fragmented national regulatory market, discouraging manufacturers from further investing in Tasmania and risking local jobs.
- **Product Dumping:** The State risks becoming a potential target for inferior building products, further eroding quality and safety.
- **Poor Building Practitioner Training:** Builders and subcontractors are already stating that it is challenging for them to interpret and apply the NCC correctly; a broad-brush deferment of NCC changes will not address the critical need to improve practitioner training.
- **Missed Opportunities:** Australia already lags globally in construction standards, and this decision will increase that gap, denying Tasmanians access to innovative, efficient, and sustainable housing solutions.

BPIC finds it concerning that national building associations, such as the HIA and MBA, are now opposing important NCC changes as "red tape" when these same groups have been key contributors to the NCC's development, which primarily focuses on essential safety, comfort, and efficiency improvements. The broad-brush deferral will be a significant setback to Tasmania's construction productivity and standards.

BPIC would also encourage you to obtain a clear understanding from building lobbyists about how a broad-brush deferral is going to underpin its claims of increasing housing supply and affordability (including full costings, projections, timeframes, guaranteed milestones and penalties for missed milestones).

We urge the Tasmanian Government to reconsider this decision immediately and request an urgent meeting.

BPIC stands ready to collaborate with all levels of government to advance the construction sector, undertake necessary innovations to address ongoing building challenges, and ensure Tasmanians benefit from high-quality, efficient, and resilient housing.

BPIC sincerely thanks you for considering our concerns. I am available to discuss these issues further with yourself or your office at your convenience. My contact details are: 0438 740 240 and eo@bpic.asn.au

Yours sincerely,



Rodger Hills – BPIC Executive Officer

BPIC is the national peak body representing Australia's leading building products industries and related services with members and associated companies directly employing over 243,300 Australians with more than 796,500 employed indirectly. Their collective industries are worth over \$67.3B in annual production to the Australian economy.