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Role model certifiers for electronic Housing Code selected

Ten accredited certifiers have been selected to take part in an important joint NSW and local government initiative which aims to allow people to get online planning approval for their house, Department Director-General Sam Haddad said today.

The electronic Housing Code pilot project will work to establish online systems for lodging and processing applications under the NSW Housing Code, cutting paperwork, delivering speedier decisions and contributing to housing affordability.

“I congratulate the 10 role models who will represent the accredited certifier community by participating in this innovative pilot program,” Mr Haddad said.

“One of the key components of the project is the development of a shared technology platform for the NSW Government, councils and certifiers to manage complying development applications.

“These role model certifiers will play a key role in identifying and resolving any issues in the proposed system prior to its implementation.

“In particular, these certifiers will provide valuable insight for the Department about the practical issues faced when applying the Code in an electronic environment and how the shared platform could work for the wider certifier community.

“We look forward to their feedback on the program both during and following its implementation.”

The 10 role model certifiers were chosen by a selection panel from a field of 22 organisations that submitted an expression of interest to the Department and the Local Government and Shires Associations in October 2009.

Depending on their capacity, at the end of the project role model certifiers will be able to receive applications and payments electronically from applicants, use the shared platform to manage processing of applications and automatically file documents with councils.

Certifiers were evaluated based on a number of criteria, including the volume and type of complying development certificates issued, the level of technology capacity in business processes and operations, and demonstrated commitment to participate fully throughout the duration of the program.

“Councils are very supportive of initiatives that will help simplify the NSW planning system and make the process more user-friendly for residents,” said President of the Local Government Association Cr Genia McCaffery.

“The feedback from the role model certifiers chosen for the project will allow us to ensure the system is efficient and workable for both councils and the building industry, and I look forward to seeing the results.”

The ten role model accredited certifiers are:

- Andson Building Services Pty Ltd - Stephen Manning
- Building Code Certifications Pty Ltd - Ray James
- Coastline Building Certification - Mark Thomas
- Express Approvals - Gurdeep Singh
- Local Certification Services Pty Ltd - Craig Hardy
- Local Certification Services Pty Ltd - Paul Gearin
- MOHare Pty Ltd - Michael O’Hare
- P & D Pty Ltd - Peter O’Neill
- Private Certifiers Australia Pty Ltd - Grant Harrington
- Urban City Consulting Pty Ltd - Troy Myers

The pilot project is a joint collaboration between the Department of Planning and the Local Government and Shires Associations, and is funded through \$5.92 million from the Federal Government under the Housing Affordability Fund.

“This is great example of State and local government working together and sharing their knowledge and expertise for the benefit of NSW communities,” said President of the Shires Association, Cr Bruce Miller.

The initiative is part of a broader vision to develop an e-Planning Roadmap for NSW, which will provide the strategic framework for the take-up of electronic planning and development systems by communities and local government, as well as NSW government agencies.

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