

Barbara Perry MP

Minister for Local Government

Minister Assisting the Minister for Planning

Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Mental Health)



March 1, 2010

New framework for building certification in NSW

The NSW Government is expanding the State's system of accreditation for building certifiers to include council building certifiers.

The changes are the first step towards one system of accreditation for all building certifiers – whether they work for a council or in the private sector, Minister Assisting on Planning Barbara Perry announced today.

Ms Perry said having an all encompassing system for both private and council certifiers will reassure the community that anyone who certifies their building work has been independently assessed to have the right qualifications and experience.

“The Building Professionals Board's new framework will set minimum standards for all certifiers in relation to qualifications, experience and professional development,” Ms Perry said.

“All certifiers will work to the same code of conduct and will be subject to similar disciplinary procedures.

“The expanded system will help improve the safety and quality of buildings, will be welcomed by consumers and certifiers alike, and will instil greater confidence in the certification system.”

Building Professionals Board President Sue Holliday said the changes will align the NSW building certification system with other States.

“These changes get us on the front foot with national licensing reforms as they are advanced by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG),” Ms Holliday said.

“They will formally recognise the skills, knowledge and professionalism of council accredited certifiers”.

Ms Holliday said expanding the accreditation system to include council accredited certifiers has been in train since the recommendations of the Campbell Inquiry into the Quality of Buildings (2002) and the *Improving our Planning System* discussion paper (2007).

“Since then, the Board has twice exhibited models of accreditation, held information sessions in 16 locations for around 700 council officers, and met extensively with many councils, the Local Government and Shires Association and the Development and Environmental Professionals' Association.”

- Councils have six months from today to ensure they have sufficient numbers of accredited certifiers to undertake all building certification work;
- Council accredited certifiers have a year's free accreditation and reduced fees after this;
- A three year transition period will allow time for all officers to be accredited – and time for employees to graduate to more senior levels of accreditation;
- A new Category A4 – Building Inspectors has been introduced to create a pathway for trainees to enter the industry.

Background notes:

- The Building Professionals Board is a statutory body under the *Building Professionals Act 2005* reporting to the Minister for Planning. The Board works to improve the quality of building construction and subdivision in NSW by regulating and educating building and subdivision certifiers.
- The Board has established, and maintains, an efficient, fair and effective system of accreditation, education, audit and complaints investigation of accredited building and subdivision certifiers.
- The Board currently accredits over 400 certifiers and expects to work with up to 1000 council accredited certifiers.