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Queensland Building Fire Safety Regulations

The Queensland Building Fire Safety Regulations have been updated with compliance required by the 1st July 2009. If you are the owner, or a business or person, that is occupying a building in Queensland, you now have a legal obligation to ensure the safety of any person in that building in the event of a fire or hazardous material emergency. The Queensland Building Fire Safety Regulations detail the legal requirements.



The following document is a brief on the new requirements.

Purpose

The purpose of this technical bulletin is to ensure organisations are aware of and comply with the new Queensland Building Fire Safety Regulations.

The new Building Fire Safety Regulations supersede the 1991 Regulation. The new regulations were enacted in July 2008. A phase in period has been allowed with existing buildings requiring compliance by the 1st of July 2009.

The objective of the new Regulation is to ensure the safe evacuation of persons from buildings and to ensure the prescribed fire safety equipment within a building is being maintained. The Regulation requires new building fire services be tested and maintained in accordance with AS1851: 2005 requirements (*Maintenance Requirements for Fire Safety Systems*). This means in Queensland there is a statutory requirement to service and maintain fire systems to the new AS1851: 2005 regime for new buildings. For buildings built prior to 2005, the fire systems are to be maintained to the relevant Australian Standard applicable on the day the building was approved.



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A major change from the superseded Building Fire Safety Regulation is the requirement of the appointment of Fire Safety Advisers for high occupancy buildings. The Fire Safety Adviser is required to hold current building fire safety qualifications (course run by the Queensland Fire & Rescue Service). The Regulation has a definition for high occupancy building which includes reference to the Queensland Workplace Health & Safety Regulation 2008 Section 56, the Workplace Health & Safety Act 1995 (where there are 30 or more workers normally employed, there is a requirement to appoint a Fire Safety Adviser).

The definition of a high occupancy building within the Regulation follows:

High occupancy building means any of the following buildings other than the building to which Section 32 applies (Section 32 description is for fire and evacuation instructions for buildings used for temporary events):

- a. A Class 2 or 3 building – more than 25m high;
- b. A Class 2, 3, 5, 6, 7b, 8, 9a or 9b building that is a workplace:
 1. Prescribed under the Workplace Health & Safety Regulation 2008 Section 56; and
 2. Where 30 or more workers are normally employed within the meaning of the Workplace Health & Safety Act 1995, Section 93 (5); (Note – Workplace Health & Safety Act 1995 Section 93 (Appointment of Workplace Health and Safety Officer by Employer))
- c. A Class 6 or 9b building that the commissioner has decided is an at risk licenced building under Section 104KD of the Fire Service Act.

Building Code of Australia Classification of Buildings and Structures

Class 1	Class 1A	A single dwelling being a detached house or one or more attached dwellings.	Which is not located above or below another dwelling or another Class of building other than a private garage.
	Class 1B	Boarding/guest house or hostel not exceeding 300m ² and not more than 12 people residing	
Class 2	A building containing 2 or more sole occupancy units each being a separate dwelling.		
Class 3	A resident building, other than a Class 1 or 2, which is common place for long term or transient living for a number of unrelated persons.		
Class 4	A dwelling in a building that is Class 5, 6, 7, 8 or 9 if it is the only dwelling in the building.		
Class 5	An office building used for professional or commercial purposes, excluding buildings of Class 6, 7, 8 or 9.		
Class 6	A shop or other building for the sale of goods by retail or the supply of services direct to the public.		
Class 7	A building which is a car park or for storage or display of goods or produce for sale by wholesale.		

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Class 8	A laboratory or a building in which a handicraft or process for the production, assembling, altering, repairing, packing, finishing or cleaning of goods or produce is carried on for trade, sale or gain.
Class 9	A building of a public nature.
Class 9A	A health care building.
Class 9B	An assembly building in a primary or secondary school, but excluding any other parts of the building that are of another class.
Class 10	A non habitable building or structure.
Class 10A	A private garage, carport, shed or the like.
Class 10B	A structure being a fence, mast, antenna, retaining or free standing wall, swimming pool or the like.

The following are particular requirements of the Building Fire Safety Regulation:

- The evacuation routes are required to be free from obstruction and evacuation plans to be in a specified form with relevant data;
- It requires the occupiers of the building to ensure the number of persons accessing the building are limited to a number which is safe for access and egress from the building;
- It requires an evacuation diagram, which is a plan of the building in an understandable form, showing the fire safety reference points and indicating the exit routes;
- There is a requirement for fire and evacuation instructions for buildings used for temporary events;
- The requirement for Fire Safety Advisers for the high occupancy buildings;
- The need for practice evacuations and a specific section on budget accommodation buildings;
- Detailed record keeping;
- Specific obligations of owners of accommodation units;
- Prescribed fire safety installation maintenance requirements and keeping records of the maintenance undertaken of the fire safety installations as well as documentation of fire safety installations installed within the building.



Responsibility

The responsibility for compliance with the Queensland Building Fire Safety Regulations lies with the owner, business or person that is occupying or managing a building within Queensland.

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RiskTech Can Help

RiskTech has the necessary technical expertise and a qualified Fire Safety Adviser who can assist you and act on your behalf to fulfil your statutory obligations. If you wish to clarify your legal requirements or if you wish us to assist you, please contact Mr Allan Sutton in our Brisbane office on 07 3435 5111 or mobile 0410 587 833.

Reference

- Queensland Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008
- Building Act 1975
- Fire and Rescue Services Act 1990
- Building Regulations 2006
- Queensland Development Code (QDC)
- AS1851: 2005

Resources

- www.legislation.qld.gov.au
- www.dip.qld.gov.au