



NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF
ARCHITECTS
I N C O R P O R A T E D

30 July 2012

Standards and Conformance Infrastructure Review
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
P.O. Box 1473
Wellington 6140

Dear Sir/Madam

Submission on the 2012 Standards and Conformance Infrastructure Review

We refer to the call for input from stakeholders on the 2012 Standards and Conformance Infrastructure Review that appears on the Ministry's website.

The New Zealand Institute of Architects Incorporated (NZIA) is a professional organisation representing 2830 members which includes 90% of Registered Architects in New Zealand.

We have consulted widely with our membership in the preparation of this submission.

As a stakeholder in the Standards regime in New Zealand the NZIA contributes to a number of SNZ committees. We were pleased to be invited to attend the recent workshops in Wellington and our comments below are a summary of the points we made at that meeting.

We respect the standards development process in New Zealand in that Standards New Zealand draws on specialist expertise from a wide range of participants and stakeholders from the relevant industry/market sector. The development process is very transparent and Standards are developed on a consensus basis resulting in pragmatic solutions that reflect the New Zealand regulatory environment and the practicalities of implementation in New Zealand.

However, working against this is that Standards New Zealand seems to be underfunded, evidenced as follows:

- Participants are not recompensed in any way for participation. This sometimes has the effect that the person asked to represent our industry is perhaps the most available, geographical as well as economically, and is not necessarily the person who has the most experience and ability to contribute to the process.
- The Standards we most refer to are not prepared or reviewed as often as we would wish. This is due to a lack of funding support for the process and unfortunately results in a less than desirable provision of service and assurance for both architect and consumer.
- Standards are not always updated as quickly as, or in harmony with, regulatory changes. The recent changes to NZ3604 is one important example where the DBH advised changes to a number of significant clauses but these do not yet appear in the Standard publication.

- Architects prepare building consent documents. It is important that a robust set of Standards should support these documents and the Building Code.
- Standards from other economies do not readily translate across borders. Our conditions for building, building materials fit for purpose and building safety are too important to assume applicability in all instances.
- We do however support the joint Australia and New Zealand process as these do allow for New Zealand conditions, remaining in effect New Zealand Standards.

In conclusion, we suggest the current system and structure be maintained albeit with appropriate funding and resourcing. We would encourage greater commitment to standards development in Australia and/or New Zealand.

Yours faithfully

John Albert
Professional Services Manager