



File No. 1617-0762

03 FEB 2017

Ms Nicola Wolley  
[fyi-request-5109-bda456d6@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-5109-bda456d6@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Ms Wolley

Thank you for your email of 20 December 2016 requesting for the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

1. Please provide the MBIE document (e.g. memo, email, proposal or similar) which outlines the MBIE Fire Programme and proposed costs, for approval, including the document reference number.
2. Please provide the formal approval document for the MBIE Fire Programme with signature, including its document reference number.
3. MBIE also undertook work in 2014 on the issue of fire safety regulations, including (but not limited to) numerous stakeholder sessions across New Zealand, surveys, engaging external consultants, etc. Please provide the cost for all work associated with the fire review prior to the formal launch of the MBIE Fire Programme in mid 2015.

In response to parts one and two of your request, please find attached the *Fire Programme – Programme Initiation Document* which is being released to you without redaction.

In response to part three of your request, I can confirm that no singular cost centre for the Fire Programme existed prior to the formal launch in October 2015. As such, costs that were incurred pre-October 2015 (when the Fire Programme cost centre was created) were attributed to a team cost centre. Therefore, costs incurred prior to October 2015 are not definitively identifiable, and this part of your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act, as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial research and collation.

However, I am able to provide you with those costs that have been identified as Fire Programme related, and the total costs incurred for the 2014/15 and 2015/16 (prior to October 2015) are outlined below.

Financial year	Total costs
2014/15	\$102,715.71
2015/16 (prior October 2015)	\$24,310.87

**Building, Resources & Markets**

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You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision. The relevant contact details are:

The Ombudsman  
Office of the Ombudsman  
PO Box 10 162  
WELLINGTON 6143

0800 802 602  
[www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Sparrow', with a small flourish at the end.

Peter Sparrow  
Acting Manager, Engineering Design and Science  
Building System Performance






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# FIRE PROGRAMME

## Programme Plan

Programme Initiation Document

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Prepared by:		Date
Chris Rutledge (Fire Review Project Lead)		
Recommended by:		
Mike Stannard, Chief Engineer BSP (Programme Executive)		
Approved by:		
Adrian Regnaud, General Manager, BSP (Senior Responsible Owner)		21/9/2015

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## Objectives

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The overarching objective of the Fire Programme (FP) is that the fire regulatory system as a whole functions effectively. This means that all the parties involved in the system understand and perform their roles effectively and to the required standard and that buildings are designed, constructed, renovated or altered to meet the Building Code's performance standards for fire safety or the requirements of the Building Act.

To fulfil its mission MBIE has to provide leadership for the sector and this requires MBIE to be accepted and respected as the leader for the sector by stakeholders. Therefore, a key objective of this programme is to re-establish MBIE as the leader in the sector based on a relationship of trust and mutual respect between MBIE and stakeholders.

The FP aims to restore a performance based approach to fire regulation. The establishment of a national performance based Building Code in 1991 was heralded as world leading, however the effect of the 2012 changes to the fire regulations resulted in compliance predominating over performance, this needs to shift back to performance and support quality fire design and innovation.

## Background

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Building Code Clause C 1 – 6 (Protection from fire) and the supporting documents (Acceptable Solutions and Verification Method) were significantly changed in 2012. The objective was to provide fire engineers with better design criteria and methods so that fire engineering design would be applied consistently and with greater rigour.

Fire engineering is a rapidly evolving area of engineering practice and prior to the 2012 changes the Building Code and supporting documents developed in 2000, had significant gaps. Examples of inadequate fire engineering design, particularly in the Auckland and Wellington commercial markets where high rise buildings were being constructed with a single means of escape, became evident and had to be addressed.

The 2012 changes were significant in content and structure and the sector found it challenging to adapt to the changes.

MBIE undertook an extensive stakeholder engagement programme with industry and sector groups in late 2014 to gather feedback on the 2012 changes. During the process stakeholders were advised MBIE would develop a plan for the future development of the fire regulations by mid-2015 to address issues raised by stakeholders.

The stakeholder engagement programme was the first phase of the Fire Review, the output was used to assess if adjustments are required following on from the 2012 changes and how MBIE can support industry adapt to the 2012 changes. As well as the output from the stakeholder engagement process, the review drew on guidance from international fire experts and conducted a critical review and assessment of the 2012 changes.

## Strategic Context

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The Fire Review identified the following issues arising from the 2012 changes that need to be addressed:

- The 2012 changes resulted in too restrictive an approach and the system settings that govern the use and acceptance of the Acceptable Solutions, the new Verification Method (introduced in the 2012 changes) and Alternative Solutions need to be adjusted.
- The top issue raised by stakeholders was reaching appropriate decisions on upgrading fire safety measures when altering, strengthening or maintaining existing buildings. Better guidance and education is needed to assist owners, designers and BCAs with this.

- The way the spread of fire requirements were included in the revised Building Code Clause C 3.4(a) is too restrictive and has particularly affected the use of timber linings. This Clause needs to be reviewed.
- The fire safety measures required for Community Care Housing for residents with differing ability to evacuate aren't clear and need to be clarified.
- Stakeholder feedback points to the consenting process for fire safety measures at the operational level not working efficiently and MBIE will work with the parties involved in the consenting process to improve operational effectiveness.

In addition a number of long standing issues emerged from the stakeholder feedback that aren't related to the 2012 changes:

- Passive Fire Protection (PFP) measures
- Construction monitoring and post-construction compliance processes
- The evacuation of persons with disabilities
- The alignment of the Building Act, HSNO regulations, the Fire Service Act and the Evacuation of Buildings regulations.

The FP addresses both the issues with the Building Code and the supporting documents arising from the 2012 changes and long standing issues in relation to fire regulation. The programme charts a clear direction and comprehensive plan for the future development of Building Code Clause C 1 – 6 (Protection from fire) and the supporting documents.

Apart from the specific issues that arose from the 2012 changes, the direction of the changes and how they were carried out had a critical impact on the relationships and dynamic between MBIE and the sector. The 2012 changes emphasised compliance over performance resulting in reduced flexibility, increased complexity, lengthened timeframes and higher costs for the sector. The actual effect of the changes was the opposite of the key messages in the communications at the time about the changes.

MBIE took a directive approach to the 2012 changes; there was a significant amount of interaction with the sector but limited genuine engagement. As a result MBIE alienated the sector and stakeholders withdrew their authorisation of MBIE's role as the leader for the sector. This was clearly evident in the interactions with stakeholder groups during the stakeholder engagement programme in late 2014.

Equally importantly the programme's underpinning principle is MBIE will partner with the sector based on a trusted relationship between MBIE and stakeholders. In this way MBIE will re-establish its leadership role for the sector which is critical to the effective functioning of the fire regulatory system.

Competence levels in the sector is a critical factor in achieving safe buildings, this ranges from fire engineering design to BCAs competence to assess fire designs for building consents to tradespeople installing passive fire protection systems. Under the umbrella of the Fire Programme we will investigate the related questions of qualifications, training and occupation regulation in the fire regulatory system. We will invite Brian Meacham to assist us in scoping this issue when he is here in early 2016 so that we can provide further advice to the Steering Group on the current state of competence in the sector and whether MBIE needs to consider initiatives to address industry competence levels. In particular, whether certain functions should be tied to qualifications or competence levels.

## **Benefits**

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The benefits of the Fire Programme are two fold, the avoidance of the risk of individual building failure and systemic failure in the sector and the promotion of efficiency and innovation.

NZ has experienced different degrees of systemic failure with weathertightness and structure (earthquakes). One of the benefits of the fire regulatory system performing effectively is the protection of individuals in buildings from harm. NZ has not experienced a major fire in a commercial high rise building or a building with vulnerable residents in the recent past, if and when such a fire occurs the 'test' for the



fire regulatory system and the Fire programme to some degree will be whether all of the occupants are safely evacuated.

The anecdotal feedback from the sector is the 2012 changes resulted in increased and unnecessary costs for industry. Also that discouraging the use of Alternative Solutions has inhibited innovation in the sector. Therefore the positive benefit from the fire regulatory system operating efficiently is reduced costs for industry and the fostering of innovation.

## Scope

Included in Scope:	Excluded from Scope:
Building Code Clause C 1 - 6 (protection from fire)	The Building Code schema
Building Code Clause A3 (Building importance levels) – the Fire programme is a contributor to the consideration of the role of <i>Importance Levels</i> in the Code	
Acceptable Solutions C/AS 1 – 7, Verification Methods C/VM 1 and 2, Alternative Solutions	
The effective functioning of the fire regulatory system – the implementation of the outcomes from the programme is in scope	
Competence levels in the sector	

## Developing the Fire Development Programme

The Fire Review commenced with the stakeholder engagement programme in late 2014. The feedback gathered from stakeholders in a series of national workshops, focus groups and a questionnaire plus a critical analysis of the 2012 changes was used to develop a set of Problem Statements. The objective was to distil the underlying issues with the 2012 changes. 19 Problem Statements were developed using the construct 'the problem is . . .' and 'the consequence is . . .' and these were endorsed by the Fire Review Steering Group (FRSG). The next step was to develop Project Briefs to address the issues distilled in the Problem Statements. The Fire Review project team developed 14 Project Briefs to address the issues identified in the 19 Problem Statements and these were approved by the FRSFG.

A brief description of each of the 14 projects is attached at Appendix 1.

The projects vary in size, scope and complexity. Individually the projects present significant challenges, following the principle that MBIE will work in partnership with stakeholders adds an additional complexity to the projects. In combination the 14 projects are a significant programme of work. The processes, management and governance arrangements need to be commensurate with the requirements of a programme of this size and complexity.

As discussed above the programme's underpinning principle is MBIE will partner with the sector based on a trusted relationship between MBIE and stakeholders. All of the projects will have some combination of Working Groups, Reference Groups and Expert Panels. For example for the Supported Housing Project a Working Group has been formed with representation from all the stakeholder groups and it will be chaired by a stakeholder representative. A Steering Group has also been formed to provide oversight of the Working Group.

## Programme Plan and Project Timelines

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The Fire Review team developed a programme plan to complete the 14 projects. It's not practical to run 14 projects simultaneously and the projects are sequenced over approximately 18 months. In general terms 6 – 7 projects will be running at any time. Apart from resourcing issues, having too many projects running in parallel heightens the risks to the individual projects and the programme. Also because the projects have a high level of involvement by stakeholders this increases the effort required due to the time it will take to maintain the relationships and lengthens the timeframes for the projects.

A gantt chart summarising the programme and project timelines is attached at Appendix 2.

Realistically not all of the projects will be completed by the end of 2016. It is important that there is momentum behind the projects and that the sector sees that the programme is delivering results. At the end of 2016 the programme should be reviewed, in 18 months' time the environment will have changed significantly, partly due to the impact of the projects that have been completed, and the programme will need to be refreshed. At this point a decision is also needed whether sufficient progress has been made to transition the programme to business as usual or if the programme needs to continue. In an ideal world, at this point, any remaining projects are transitioned to business as usual.

The programme plan will be kept under review and updated with regular reporting to the Steering Group. Project plans have been developed for each of the 14 projects. Key milestones for each project are included in the programme report for the Steering Group to monitor the project and programme progress.

## Quality Assurance

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Each project will develop a Quality Assurance plan, this will be the responsibility of the Working Groups convened for the projects. Stakeholders involved in the projects need to have the opportunity to contribute to the quality measures for the project to provide a sector perspective and to engender stakeholder ownership of the outcomes from the projects. Under the programme's governance framework the Quality Assurance plans will be approved by the Steering Group.

## Programme and Project Governance

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The project governance for the Fire Review Project worked effectively. The Fire Review Steering Group provided effective oversight, direction and decisions for the project. It also has served as an effective forum to discuss issues surfaced by the project during the investigation and analysis of the 2012 changes and to provide direction on these issues.

A key learning from the decision making processes that applied to the 2012 changes is the necessity for key policy issues to be reviewed and tested by the BSP managers who together act as the stewards of the Code. A principle of good governance is that decisions should be taken at the level commensurate with their consequences, this did not occur consistently with the 2012 changes. The Steering Group is the forum to review and test proposals for fire regulations and to ensure that the approach is aligned with the principle of a performance based code. This will ensure that quality advice is provided to the GM by the Programme Executive when key decisions arising from the projects are being recommended to the GM.

All significant policy issues arising from the projects will be referred to the Steering Group with appropriate consideration, analysis and recommendations. Where required the Programme Executive will escalate issues to the GM for his consideration and decision.

The Fire Review Project had a single deliverable, a plan that charts a clear direction and comprehensive plan for the future development of fire regulation. The FP is the output from the Fire Review Project. The programme comprises 14 projects, approximately half will be active at any point in time and the programme will run for 18 months to the end of 2016 when it will be refreshed. This requires a more sophisticated set of management and governance arrangements. Equally importantly the governance structure should connect the programme with the BSP group's business as usual work programme.

The governance structure below is designed to ensure:

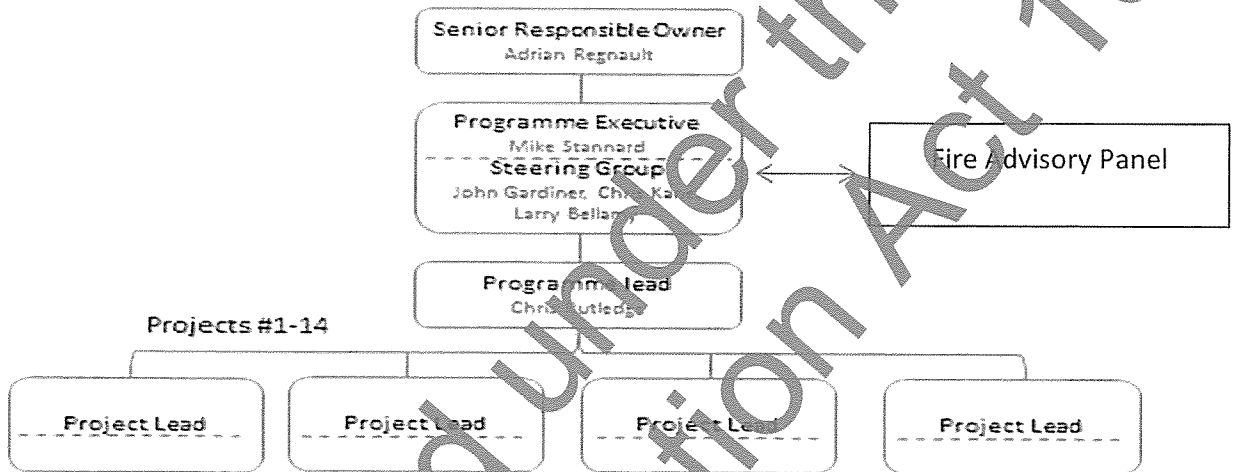
- the projects are managed effectively and the programme is governed appropriately
- issues and risks are escalated to the appropriate level for resolution
- all policy issues are considered by the Steering Group and recommended to the GM
- the projects and business as usual activity are aligned where they overlap and/or de-conflicted.

The last point is important; the programme is running under a programme governance structure in parallel with BSP's business as usual activity. The projects need to be connected and de-conflicted from business as usual activity, in some instances the projects may need to be aligned with business as usual activity or even integrated with business as usual activity. The Steering Group reviewed a number of options for the governance structure to address this, the Steering Group decided to take responsibility for de-conflicting and aligning the projects and business as usual with the Programme Lead providing advice to support to the Steering Group. The Programme Lead will pro-actively engage with BSP managers to align and/or de-conflict the fire projects and business as usual activity.

Role	Responsibilities
<b>Adrian Regnault, GM, Building System Performance</b>  Senior Responsible Owner	Approves the Fire Programme (FP) (including the programme budget) and the Stakeholder and Communications Plan Ensures alignment of the programme with Ministerial priorities and building and housing strategic direction Signs out significant advice to Minister(s)/Cabinet Is the escalation point to resolve significant programme risks and policy issues
<b>Mike Stannard, Chief Engineer, Building System Performance</b>  Programme Executive	Chairs the FP Steering Group Recommends the FP (including the programme budget) and Stakeholder and Communications Plan to the GM for approval Ensures the programme is budgeted and sufficiently resourced Briefs the GM on programme performance Escalates issues and risks from the Steering Group to the GM Recommends decisions required to the GM Signs out advice to Minister(s)/Cabinet (or recommends to GM for sign-out)
Steering Group – Mike Stannard (chair), Larry Bellamy, Chris Kane, John Gardiner	Reviews and advises on the Programme Plan (including the programme budget) and Stakeholder and Communications Plan Reviews the performance of the programme – deliverables, timeliness, budget Approves the Quality Assurance plan for each project Responsible for managing the relationship between the project and business as usual Reviews and advises on policy issues arising from the programme Provides direction to ensure all developments support a performance based approach Approves changes to the Programme Plan Ensures project risks and issues are addressed
<b>Chris Rutledge</b>  Programme Lead	Responsible for the Programme outcomes within agreed scope, budget, timelines and quality standards Provides oversight, support and advice to the Project Leads Approves project expenditure Identifies risks and assigns responsibility for managing/mitigating risks Resolves or escalates programme issues and risks to the Steering Group Provides programme reporting to the Steering Group

	<p>Recommends changes to the Programme – addition/deletion of projects, variations to project timelines, reallocation of budget</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> point of escalation for issues and risks</p>
<p>Project Leads</p> <p>Michael Belsham, Richard London, Mike Cox</p>	<p>Responsible for Project deliverables within agreed timeframes, budget and quality standards</p> <p>Escalate issues to the Programme Lead.</p> <p>Provides monthly project reporting to the Programme Lead</p>

**Fire Regulation Development Programme**  
**Governance arrangements**



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## Fire Advisory Panel

An advisory group was established under the Building Industry Authority (BIA) to provide advice and feedback on fire issues and it operated successfully until it was shut down under the Department of Building and Housing (DBH). A founding member of the group commented the group ceased to be viewed as relevant by DBH and its advice was neither sought nor taken account of.

The Fire Review Steering Group has recommended a sector advisory group is re-established for fire. The advisory group will be re-formed in conjunction with the roll-out of the FP. The purpose of the group will be to provide the sector's perspective on; fire issues, proposals for the fire regulations and the performance of the fire regulatory system. It will also be invited to raise fire issues it considers MBIE needs to address.

## Project Resourcing

Role	Name	FTE Requirement
MBIE staff		
Programme Lead	Chris Rutledge	1
Project Lead	Michael Belsham	0.8
Project Lead	Richard London	0.5 [tbc]
Project Lead	Mike Cox	1
Project Lead	[tbc]	0.5
Programme Support	Cian Spillane/[tbc]	0.25/0.5
Stakeholder Relations	Jodie Lamb/Nicola Martin	0.2/0.5

## Budget Summary

Item	2015/16	2016/17
Sector Engagement	\$141,940	\$85,164
Consultancy	\$278,000	\$166,800
Personnel	\$386,600	\$224,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$806,540</b>	<b>\$476,364</b>

It has been agreed the FP will operate under a separate Cost Centre based on the same approach that applies to the Earthquake Building Resilience (EBR) project. Under the proposed governance structure the responsibility for managing the budget sits with the Programme Lead and expenditure will be approved by the Programme Executive.

## Key Dependencies

Linkage or dependency	Description of the linkage or dependency and how it will be managed
NZFS role in consenting	A recommendation to change the timing of NZFS advice on Firefighting and Evacuation in the consenting process provided for in the Building Act 2004 has triggered the question whether this advice should be contestable. This has high importance for NZFS and could impact the objective to form a strong partnership between NZFS and MBIE.
Building Importance Levels	Code Clause A3 (Building Importance Levels) was added to the Code as part of the 2012 changes. It applies exclusively to Code Clause C 1 – 6 (protection from fire), however the introduction of Importance Levels was not fully followed through in the Acceptable Solutions. Importance levels are applied to structure separately through the application of NZAS 1170. Work is being undertaken on the practical application of Importance Levels under the Standard. The place of Importance Levels in the Code, how they are invoked and their application to specific Code clauses is being addressed and the Fire Programme is a contributor to this work.

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**Key Risks**

<b>Risks with high significance/impact:</b>	
Stakeholders	Due to their experience with the 2012 changes stakeholders do not engage with MBIE or participate in the projects Sector groups adopt an advocacy approach
Partners	The NZFS and MBIE have interlocking responsibilities in the fire regulatory system and for the system to perform NZFS and MBIE need to operate in partnership in the absence of a strong partnership between NZFS and MBIE the system will not operate as effectively as needed
Resourcing	The programme is not adequately resourced resulting in the projects performing poorly leading to a loss of confidence by stakeholders in MBIE's commitment to deliver the promised outcomes
FP and Business as Usual	The projects and business as usual are not disconnected resulting in overlap between the programme and business as usual causing confusion and conflict internally and a loss of confidence with external stakeholders The projects and business as usual are not connected and integrated with business as usual where this is appropriate resulting in duplication of effort and potential conflict between the projects and business as usual

**Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Plan**

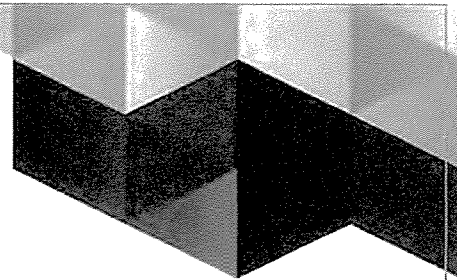
A Stakeholder Engagement and Communications plan has been developed for the programme.

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# BUILDING PERFORMANCE



## Fire Programme

In late 2014, a review of the fire regulation changes implemented in 2012 was initiated. This review was in response to stakeholder feedback and to gauge issues being experienced by the sector following the changes.

In April 2012 the Building Code provisions for fire safety and the supporting documents (Acceptable Solutions and Verification Method) were changed. The changes were made to provide designers, fire engineers and Building Consent Authorities with better design criteria and methods so that fire design could be applied more consistently. The changes were significant in content and structure and the sector experienced issues in adjusting to the changes.

In response to the industry feedback, MBIE commenced a review in 2014 of the effectiveness of the 2012 changes to determine if any adjustments were required, and how MBIE can support industry in adapting to the changes. This produced a substantial amount of feedback. In response, we have developed a plan to improve fire safety in New Zealand, and for this to occur in collaboration with the sector.

As well as the feedback from the stakeholder engagement process, the review drew on guidance from international fire experts, and undertook a critical review and assessment of the 2012 changes.

The review identified a range of issues that need to be addressed and the Fire Programme has been developed in response. The programme is made up of 14 projects and the following brief outlines a short description of each project.

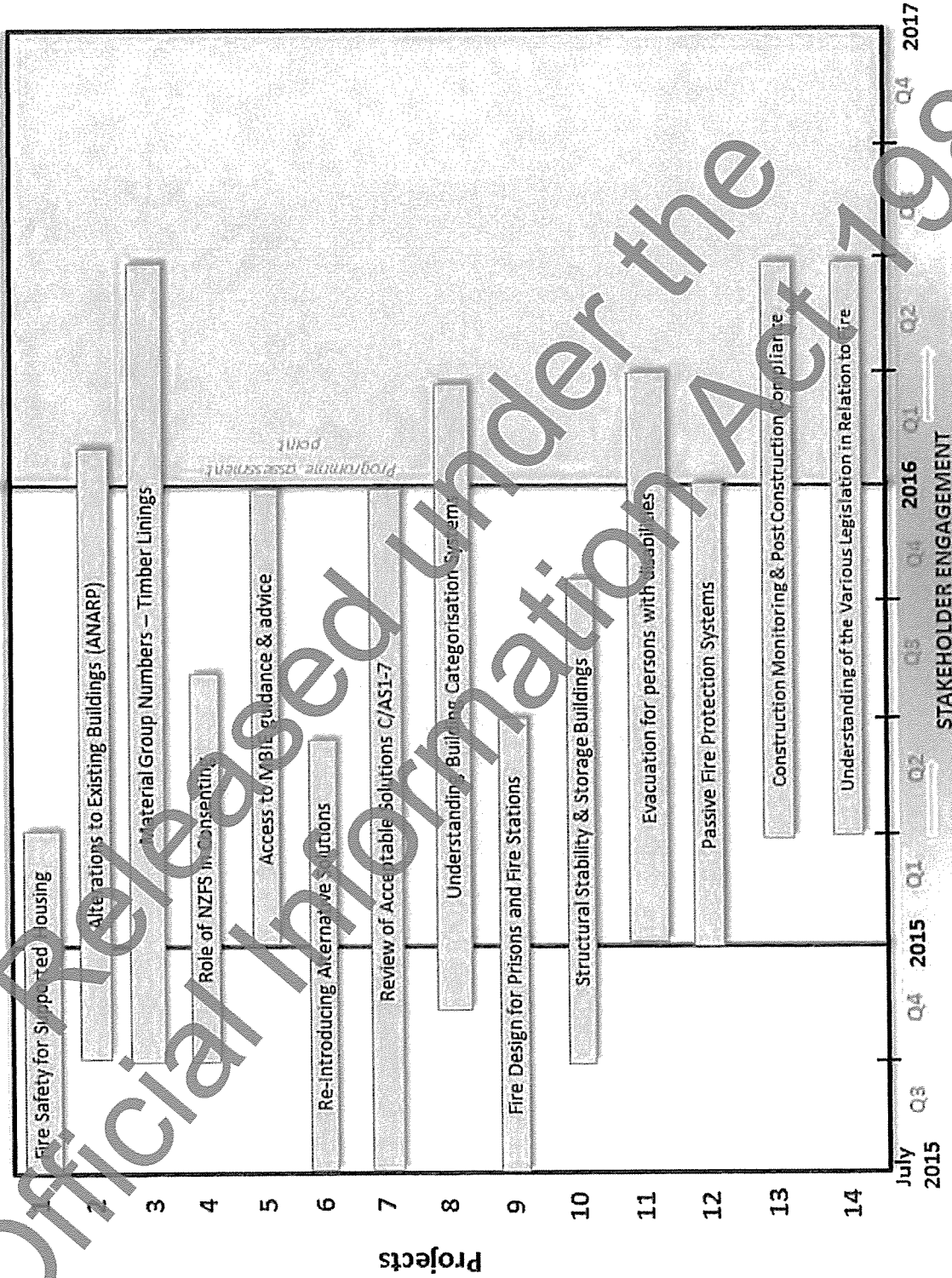
Stakeholders will have various opportunities to participate in and provide input to the projects. More information about these opportunities will be outlined as each project is initiated.

We're happy to hear your questions on the Fire Programme, or on individual projects, and can be contacted via [firereview@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:firereview@mbie.govt.nz).



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# Fire Programme Schedule



Time line (to the nearest quarter)

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# BUILDING PERFORMANCE

## Projects

1. Fire Safety Requirements for Supported Housing
2. Alterations to Existing Buildings and As Near As Reasonably Practicable (ANARP)  
Decisions for Fire Safety Requirements
3. Material Group Numbers – Timber Linings
4. Role of the New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS) in Consenting
5. Stakeholder Access to MBIE Guidance and Advice
6. Re-Introduction of Alternative Solutions and the Effectiveness of the FEB Process
7. Review of Acceptable Solutions C/AS1-7
8. Understanding Building Categorisation Systems
9. Fire Design for Prisons and Fire Stations and Other Specialist Buildings
10. Structural Stability and Storage Buildings
11. Evacuation for Persons with Disabilities in Commercial Buildings
12. Installation and Compliance of Passive Fire Protection Systems
13. Construction Monitoring and Post-Construction Compliance
14. Understanding all of the Legislation and Regulations that applies to Fire Safety in

building



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## Project Descriptions

### 1. Fire Safety Requirements for Supported Housing

In 2014, an amendment to the Acceptable Solution C/AS3 brought Supported (or community care) Housing under the new Risk Group *Care or Detention*. The fire safety measures required under C/AS3 are calibrated to the highest risk buildings in the Risk Group (hospitals) without regard to management structures or the nature of Supported Housing in a normal residential setting.

The amendment has created issues for the sector with Building Code compliance, and the provision of supported living in a normal residential setting with the appropriate fire safety measures.

MBIE will work with service providers, housing providers, funding providers (MoH), NZFS and the disability sector to uncover and address the issues with fire safety provisions for Supported Housing.

### 2. Alteration to Existing Buildings and As Near As Reasonably Practicable (ANARP) Decisions for Fire Safety Requirements

There was significant stakeholder feedback that ANARP decisions for existing buildings are more difficult following the 2012 changes for alterations to existing buildings. The consequence has caused uncertainty for building owners, designers and BCAs resulting in delays, building upgrades not proceeding, illegal work and additional costs.

This project will look into issues of ANARP in consenting and consider developing guidance along with worked examples to support better quality ANARP decisions for fire safety measures. This will be further supported by workshops and training for designers, fire engineers and BCAs.

### 3. Material Group Numbers – Timber Linings

The internal surface finish requirements included in the Building Code Clause C3.4 in 2012 are restrictive and this has affected the use of timber linings in buildings.

The project will review Code Clause C3.4 and investigate alternative ways to specify performance requirements for surface finishes enabling different solutions whilst maintaining the appropriate level of fire safety when considering fire spread. Research is required to understand the phenomena of fire spread on surfaces. This project will also look into a Verification Method for combustible wall linings.

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# BUILDING PERFORMANCE

## 4. Role of the New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS) in Consenting

Stakeholder feedback from the Fire Review identified a number of issues relating to the role of NZFS in the building regulatory system.

The Building Act outlines the role of the NZFS in the consent process; being to provide non-binding advice on design for evacuation and firefighting.

Issues raised by stakeholders about the NZFS' role in the building regulatory system will be addressed by MBIE and NZFS, working in partnership with industry stakeholders.

## 5. Stakeholder Access to MBIE Guidance and Advice

MBIE proactively provides a significant amount of guidance and advice and in response to queries raised by BCAs and other parts of the sector. Previous research showed that this is highly valued. Guidance, advice and information are delivered in a number of different forms and via various channels however, it can be hard to find on the website.

The flow of information between MBIE, the sector and BCAs is critical to the effective functioning of the regulatory system. The project objective is to ensure BCAs and the sector can easily access the information they need and then receive prompt, consistent responses to queries.

## 6. Re-Introduction of Alternative Solutions and the Effectiveness of the FEB Process

The 2012 changes limited the use of Alternative Solutions and promoted the Verification Method C/VM2 to introduce consistency and increased rigour into fire engineering design including the introduction of the Fire Engineering Brief (FEB) process.

The changes resulted in a restrictive approach and the system settings that govern the use of Acceptable Solutions, the new verification Method and Alternative Solutions need to be adjusted.

Alternative Solutions need to be re-introduced into the system and FEB Process improved, whilst ensuring the quality of fire designs is maintained. This project will set a path for formulating and consenting Alternative Solutions.



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# BUILDING PERFORMANCE

## 7. Review of the Acceptable Solutions C/AS1-7

Feedback from stakeholders noted the seven Acceptable Solutions (C/AS1-7) requires a complete overview. This new documents require more definitions and the status of the commentary is also unclear.

Acceptable Solution C/AS1 also needs to be reviewed as a complete solution for housing and outbuildings in its entirety. MBIE is to carry out a complete review of the Acceptable Solutions C/AS1-7 to remove errors and inconsistencies and improve the quality of the documents. The status of the commentary documents will also be reviewed.

## 8. Understanding Building Categorisation Systems

The change from 16 Purpose Groups to 7 Risks Groups has created complexity to the building regulatory system for fire. This has made it difficult for end users to understand and apply the regulatory requirements correctly.

The activity use groups that apply for the Change of Use regulation, no longer align with the new Risk Groups, creating further difficulty for users trying to determine if a Change of Use has occurred.

The project will review the way in which the different categorisation systems are currently applied and will recommend improvements and/or how they can be rationalised. Guidance will then be developed to assist users to navigate the building categorisation systems as they apply to fire.

## 9. Fire Design for Prisons and Fire Stations and Other Specialist Buildings

The 2012 changes removed Prison Buildings from the Acceptable Solutions. Additionally, the introduction of the Verification Method incurred an increased cost for fire engineering design for Fire Stations being upgraded to meet seismic standards. Corrections and NZFS have developed design manuals for fire safety for their specialist buildings to meet Building Code requirements.

The project will develop guidance to support the design manuals as Alternative Solutions to meet Building Code requirements. The project will also investigate if this approach is suitable to apply to other classes of specialist buildings.



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# BUILDING PERFORMANCE

## 10. Structural Stability and Storage Buildings

The 2012 changes amended the Building Code Clause C6 for Structural Stability and also changed the requirements in the Acceptable Solutions for structural stability.

These changes created uncertainty about the requirements for structural stability for housing and warehouses. The linkages between Building Code Clauses B1, C6 and Verification Methods B1/VM1 and C/VM2 need to be investigated.

The new Acceptable Solution C/AS6 also requires sprinklers for all large storage buildings and the appropriateness of this requirement needs to be re-assessed.

MBIE will review the structural stability requirements during and after fire and align the different requirements together with the requirement for sprinklers in C/AS6.

## 11. Evacuation for Persons with Disabilities from Commercial Buildings

One of the long standing issues raised by stakeholders is the fire evacuation of people with disabilities in commercial buildings is unclear and there is uncertainty of the features and systems required for safe evacuation of all occupants.

The project will review the evacuation of persons with disabilities required under the Building Act and Building Code. This will also be linked with any requirements from the broader access review that is currently underway within the Office of Disability Issues (ODI).

## 12. Installation and Compliance of Passive Fire Protection Systems

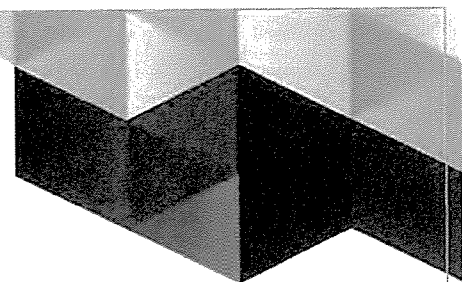
There was significant stakeholder feedback about the lack of adequate passive fire protection measures in construction and maintenance of commercial buildings. Stakeholders indicated concern about the correct specification, installation, inspection and maintenance of passive fire protection features. The sector has requested guidance on passive fire protection systems and fire stopping systems. There are several product specific installation guides, but no industry standard for fire stopping.

The project objective is to increase knowledge about correct passive fire protection measures and improve the quality of construction and maintenance of passive fire protection systems in buildings.



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# BUILDING PERFORMANCE



## 13. Construction Monitoring and Post-Construction Compliance

The 2012 changes did not directly affect construction monitoring or post construction compliance; however a number of issues were raised by industry stakeholders about both. This included uncertainty around the process to secure a Code Compliance Certificate and requirements for ongoing inspections and maintenance of buildings under the BWOF system.

Stakeholders indicated that building owners often lack, lose or never receive critical information regarding specific fire design parameters and other building design features contributing to the building's compliance at the time of construction.

The project objective is to improve the quality of information inspection and auditing to ensure buildings continue to perform at the standard when they were constructed.

## 14. Understanding all of the Legislation and Regulations that Applies to Fire Safety in Buildings

Stakeholders highlighted the difficulty in ensuring fire designs comply with overlapping legislation and regulations including: the Resource Management Act, the Hazard Substances and New Organisms Act, the Fire Service Act and the Building Act. The relationships between the different legislation and regulations that relate to fire are also not well understood.

The project will investigate possible opportunities to provide guidance on using the different Acts and regulations that relate to fire design to navigate the requirements under the different legislation and regulations.

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