

BUILDING MINISTERS' FORUM

21 April 2017

Communiqué

The Building Ministers' Forum (BMF) was held in Sydney on Friday, 21 April 2017, for Ministers to decide on a range of significant measures that will benefit the Australian building, plumbing and construction industry and the wider Australian community.

Ministers discussed the revised Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) for the Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB), to ensure it continues to support the BMF's priorities for the national building reform agenda. Ministers agreed in-principle to ratify the new IGA before 30 June 2017.

Ministers support the strengthening of the WaterMark Certification Scheme, and endorsed the ABCB's approach to explore whether WaterMark could be expanded to include Point of Sale regulations within jurisdictions.

Ministers agreed to continue implementing measures through the Senior Officers' Group, to address risks related to non-conforming building products. The implementation plan will be published in May 2017.

Ministers also supported the ABCB's research plan into possible measures that may contribute to a reduction in jumping suicide from newly constructed buildings.

Several important issues relating to accessibility were also discussed. State and Territory Governments have made progress towards increasing the stock of universal and accessible housing. Ministers agreed to propose to COAG that a national Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) be undertaken as soon as possible to consider applying a minimum accessibility standard for private dwellings in Australia.

Further, Ministers agreed an RIA will be undertaken to consider expanding the National Construction Code to include requirements for accessible sanitary facilities for people with a profound disability. Ministers noted that some jurisdictions may progress requirements for accessible sanitary facilities independent of the national process.

The BMF is an important way for jurisdictions to collaborate on matters of national significance to the building and construction industry.

The BMF will reconvene in Brisbane in October 2017 to continue this important national dialogue.