

IPENZ
ENGINEERS NEW ZEALAND

The Institution of Professional Engineers New Zealand Inc. Patakai Kaiweteapanga, Ngāio o Aotearoa
Ground Floor, 158 The Terrace, PO Box 12 241, Wellington 6144, New Zealand
T 64 4 473 9444 F 64 4 474 8933 E ipenz@ipenz.org.nz www.ipenz.org.nz

8 September 2008

Restricted building work consultation
Department of Building and Housing
Level 6
86 Customhouse Quay
Wellington 6011

To whom it may concern

Restricted building work consultation

The Institution of Professional Engineers New Zealand (IPENZ) is the lead national professional body representing the engineering profession in New Zealand. It has approximately 10,000 Members, including a cross-section from engineering students to practising engineers to senior Members in positions of responsibility in business. IPENZ is non-aligned and seeks to contribute to the community in matters of national interest giving a learned view on important issues, independent of any commercial interest.

We have consulted our Membership, and received little feedback. This indicates that our Membership is broadly happy with the proposed definition. Thus, IPENZ supports the proposal for a definition of restricted building work where that work is by nature important to the building, is complex to do and should only be undertaken by a recognised competent person. There are just two areas of concern.

A number of engineers have expressed concern in respect of compromise, during other construction activities, of passive fire protection systems. This is not specifically because there is any greater residual risk to human life that has been identified by any particular event, but because there is some evidence that this work is not generally performed competently or is otherwise altered prior to or during occupation. We fully support that design of fire protection systems should be RBW. We support that the actual construction and reconstruction after penetrations should not be. However, we are of the view that monitoring/observation of any construction work affecting fire protection systems should be restricted building work, and that the relevant LBP for that observation/monitoring to ensure that the system retains the integrity intended by the designer should be the relevant design LBP, and the only relevant LBP at the moment is a CPEng.

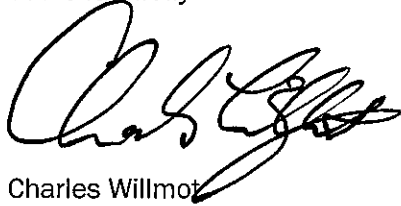
This then foreshadows that we consider that there is still considerable work to do in regard to licence classes for specified systems/building services, and the way in which the role of the previous IQP is included in licensing. We consider that a working group of relevant parties needs to be call together urgently to consider this, particularly as the interaction of RBW and the licence classes are inextricably linked, and the decision we recommend now on RBW pre-determines the need to resolve the related issues.

Some of our Members are also concerned by the boundaries of in the RBW definition in regard to structural engineering. One example is what can be termed secondary structure – internal structure that has the potential to cause harm to occupants if it fails in an earthquake or other event. We recognise the need to keep the definition of RBW simple and workable, but would urge consideration of the most critical elements of secondary structure being included in RBW if a simple definition can be found e.g. wall items over a certain height (4m?), or suspended items over a certain mass per square metre. The second example of concern is farm bridges. We are aware that a bridge is a

building under the Building Act unless the fall from it would be less than a metre, but of course farm bridges are constructed by the owner on their own land which raises a further complication. IPENZ recommends that any bridge which may be accessed by a member of the public in the course of their day-to-day activities should be afforded the same level of safety as any other bridge, should thus be RBW. Such bridges should not be included in the DIY provisions currently provided for under the proposal.

Apart from these specific issues, IPENZ is generally in agreement with the proposal.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charles Willmot', written over a faint, illegible printed name.

Charles Willmot
Director - Engineering

DDI: 04 474 8932
Email: dir.eng@ipenz.org.nz