

Queensland Government Response to Premier's Council on Climate Change Working Paper

Working Paper 2
Building ClimateSmart in Queensland: Building and Regulatory Reform

Coordinated by the Department of Infrastructure and Planning



June 2009



Introduction

The Premier's Council on Climate Change provides the Queensland Government with high-level strategic advice on climate change issues and actions. The work program of the Council is facilitated by a number of working groups comprising Council members.

The Council provided the *Working Paper 2: Building ClimateSmart in Queensland: Building and Regulatory Reform* to the Queensland Government for consideration in October 2008. The working paper was prepared by the Council's Planning and Regulatory Reform Working Group.

Queensland's built environment contributes significantly to the State's greenhouse gas emissions. In 2005, approximately 15 per cent of Queensland's emissions total came from the commercial and residential sectors. This figure largely comprises energy end use by building occupants, such as cooling and heating, water heating, lighting and appliance use¹.

The strong economic and population growth in Queensland has contributed to significant growth in demand in the building sector. Under a 'business as usual' scenario, it is estimated that by 2050 emissions from the residential and commercial sectors in Australia could reach approximately 270 million tonnes of CO₂-e². This represents an increase of 78 percent and 154 percent respectively.

Continuing to build and maintain inefficient buildings will compound the increasing energy requirements and greenhouse gas emissions from this sector. In addition, continuing to build to sub-optimal energy efficiency standards is likely to lead to retrofitting at a later date resulting in costs that could have been avoided during design and construction.

The working paper considered a range of initiatives and policy options that the Queensland Government could implement to take advantage of cost effective opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Queensland's built environment.

In May 2009, the Queensland Government considered the working paper and supported the progression of a number of measures which are summarised in this document

¹ *The Second Plank – Building a Low Carbon Economy with Energy Efficient Buildings*, Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council, 2008.

¹ Ibid.



Response to recommendations of the Premier's Council on Climate Change

Low-risk or low-cost options to remove barriers:		
PCCC Recommendation	Outcome	Government response
Remove barriers to on-site energy generation	Accepted	The Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation will develop planning and assessment guidelines to assist local Councils and the development industry remove barriers to on-site energy generation in large commercial buildings; and, standard technical guidelines and connection agreements for on-site generation by Ergon and Energex.
Amend body corporate legislation to enable energy-efficient building management	Accepted	The Queensland Government made a 2009 election commitment to "Ban the Banners" by outlawing Body Corporates and developers from banning energy efficient building materials.
Supporting sustainability declaration implementation	Accepted	The Department of Infrastructure and Planning will lead the drafting of amending legislation to mandate the completion of a sustainability declaration by an owner or suitably qualified person at point-of-sale for residential buildings.
Expand the Building and Development Tribunal jurisdiction to hear disputes on sustainability issues	Accepted	The Government approved, in-principle, expanding the Building and Development Tribunal's jurisdiction under the <i>Integrated Planning Act 1997</i> to hear certain disputes on sustainability issues, subject to further definition of the matters able to be contested.



Options that represent policy change or involve some cost:		
PCCC Recommendation	Outcome	Government response
Develop an accelerated assessment new approval process for high-performance buildings and developments	Accepted	The Queensland Government made a 2009 election commitment to develop a “Green Door” process to accelerate assessment of residential and commercial developments that demonstrate exemplary sustainability features.
Mandate 6-star standards for new houses and major renovations by 2010, increasing to 7-star by 2015	Accepted in part	The Queensland Government approved increasing the energy equivalence rating for new houses and house renovations to 6-star by 2010. Subject to the finalisation of the Council of Australian Governments’ sponsored regulatory impact statement on 6-star energy efficiency for new houses and units, the Queensland Government will commence further consultation with industry on moving to a 7-star energy efficiency rating for new houses.
Mandate 5-star standards for multi-residential buildings by 2010 increasing to 6-star by 2015	Accepted	The Queensland Government approved moving to 5-star standards for new units in 2010. The Council of Australian Governments has sponsored a regulatory impact statement on 6-star energy efficiency for new units from May 2011.
Increase standards for commercial buildings to 5-star equivalent performance, moving to mandatory 6-star by 2015	Accepted	The Department of Infrastructure and Planning will undertake a cost benefit analysis into increasing the energy equivalence rating in new Government buildings. For non-Government commercial buildings, the Department of Infrastructure and Planning will investigate increasing standards to 5-star by 2010 and 6-star by 2015 in consultation with the Australian Buildings Codes Board.
Mandate electrical sub metering in all new commercial buildings.	Accepted	The Queensland Government approved in-principle that legislation be amended to mandate electrical sub metering in new commercial buildings.



Innovative options that represent world's best practice:		
PCCC Recommendation	Outcome	Government response
Develop an energy efficiency trading scheme	Noted	The Office of Clean Energy will explore an energy efficiency trading scheme.
Provide stamp duty rebates for installation of energy efficient technology	Not accepted	Rebates are not the best mechanism for driving investment in energy efficient technology. Initial research suggests that an energy efficiency trading scheme is a more efficient mechanism to improve energy efficiency in building stock than a rebate system and therefore progressing this recommendation would be of minimal benefit.
Mandate offsetting for houses that install energy-intensive technology, such as more than 2.5kW of air conditioning or a swimming pool (noted as part of Sustainable Housing Stage 2 submission)	Accepted - the need for higher energy performance standards, subject to further consideration of detail	The Queensland Government provided in-principle support for mandating higher energy performance standards for large houses with a range of implementation options to be considered in 2009.
Energy infrastructure charge—flexible developer incentives for energy-efficient buildings	Not accepted	Due to the current economic climate, the Queensland Government considered that it was not appropriate to commence investigations into developing an infrastructure charge and that the progression of this measure could occur in the future.

