



Amended April 2009

Code of Practice For House Energy Rating Assessors

For the purposes of Regulation 88 of the Development Regulations 2008, persons listed on the Register of House Energy Rating Assessors are recognised as 'Independent Technical Experts' for energy efficiency matters referred to in V2.6.2 – Housing Provisions – Volume 2 of the Building Code of Australia.

1. Purpose

This Code of Practice outlines the functions and responsibilities of house energy rating assessors wishing to be recognised as independent technical experts under Regulation 88 of the Development Regulations 2008. It will ensure that house energy ratings for the energy efficiency potential of houses are verified in a credible and reliable manner and in compliance with the provisions of the Development Act 1993.

2. House energy rating assessments

Under the Act, all buildings constructed in South Australia must comply with the Building Rules and residential (Class 1) buildings must have an adequate level of thermal performance to ensure efficient use of energy for internal heating and cooling.

Energy efficiency provisions for residential buildings are enforced through the Building Code of Australia (BCA) - Volume 2 (Housing Provisions) which is called up under the Development Act 1993. A house energy rating of at least 5 stars, as assessed with software that meets the *ABCB Protocol for House Energy Rating Software – Version 2006.1* satisfies a verification method, V2.6.2.1, of the Housing Provisions for compliance with the building fabric performance requirement in the BCA.



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3. Assessment against the Building Rules

When an application is received for building rules consent under the Act, the relevant approving authority, either the council or a private certifier, will check that the house complies with the deemed-to-satisfy acceptable construction practice in the BCA, unless the applicant indicates that the house should be assessed through an alternative solution. Such an alternate solution could be nominated as requiring assessment against verification method, V2.6.2.1 of the Housing Provisions which requires a 5-star rating determined using a thermal calculation method that complies with the current ABCB Protocol for House Energy Rating Software. House energy ratings should be completed by a designer, builder or building surveyor or other person who is competent in using the house energy rating software.

Under Regulation 88, a relevant authority does not need to check certain aspects of the Building Rules if a certificate from an independent technical expert is lodged with the development application. A relevant authority must accept a certificate from a house energy rating assessor who is recognised as an independent technical expert for the purposes of energy efficiency and who must be listed on the Register of House Energy Rating Assessors maintained by the Registration Authority. These certificates are to provide independent verification of the star-rating being claimed and as such, house energy rating assessors must not have any involvement in any aspect of the relevant development (other than through the provision of preliminary advice of a routine or general nature), or have a pecuniary interest in any aspect of the relevant development or any body associated with any aspect of the relevant development in accordance with Regulation 85.

4. Recognition of Assessors

To be eligible for inclusion on the Department of Planning and Local Government's Register, house energy rating assessors must provide evidence that they satisfy one of the following requirements:

- A pass in an examination or accreditation set by the Association of Building Sustainability Assessors (ABSA).
- A pass in an examination in the use of software that meets the *ABCB Protocol for House Energy Rating Software – Version 2006.1*; or
- Accreditation by a recognised Accreditation Management Authority in accordance with the National House Energy Rating Scheme Protocol for Assessor Accrediting Organisations.

House energy rating assessors must use the house energy rating software in which they have had training and been examined, or for which they hold accreditation. They will be required to use a current 'regulatory' version of the software, agree to comply with this Code of Practice and to undertake ratings in a consistent and ethical manner.

The signing of this document will indicate acceptance of the Code of Practice. The Register of House Energy Rating Assessors is available from the Department of Planning and Local Government and is listed on the department website at www.planning.sa.gov.au/go/hera.

5. Certifying a house energy rating

The claimed star ratings for house designs are to be verified using the version of software that meets the ABCB Protocol for House Energy Rating Software – Version 2006.1 referenced in the BCA, using regulation settings. Once the relevant data has been entered, the software program generates a report indicating the house energy rating, which is then to be certified by the house energy rating assessor, together with the information supplied in support of the claimed star-rating.



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Prior to certifying an energy rating the assessor must obtain clarification in writing from the applicant of any unspecified aspects of the design that may affect the energy rating.

The assessor must apply all standard assumptions for regulatory purposes when using house energy rating software. It is imperative that the assessor checks with the relevant software manual for the standard assumptions set by the software administrator or the Assessor Accrediting Organization (where applicable), as the requirements may vary between software products.

Each certified house energy rating must include two copies of the certified house energy rating report and two sets of adequately detailed drawings (floor plans and all elevations) showing the orientation of the house, window sizes and ceiling heights, shading details and construction materials. All aspects of the building pertinent to the final rating must be provided on the drawings and/or specification. All other relevant information which is required for the rating assessment (for example, insulation R values, obstructions etc) must be obtained from the client and certified. Each drawing containing information relevant to the rating and the front cover of the specification shall be signed and dated by the house energy rating assessor. The documents shall clearly identify all relevant factors relating to the building design which support the energy rating. A rating with inadequate documentation will be considered an incompetent rating under this Code of Practice.

This certified documentation must then be submitted as part of the application for building rules consent.

An assessor must not alter or amend the drawings or specification in order to provide details that are necessary to comply with the required energy rating. If necessary, the drawings and the star rating calculations must be amended by the applicant and re-submitted to the assessor for certification.

6. Notice of rating

The assessor must certify the correct house energy rating report which will be printed on the Notice of Rating page of the software that meets the *ABCB Protocol for House Energy Rating Software – Version 2006.1* and must include the following:

- Applicant's name, address, and contact number
- The address of proposed dwelling or the name of the design
- Council and if relevant Private Certifier who will be undertaking the building rules assessment
- The name of the house energy rating assessor
- The date of the rating
- The energy star rating and the energy consumption in MJ/m² pa
- The software package, version and mode used for the assessment
- A note confirming the assessor's status as an independent technical expert under Regulation 85.

The assessor must sign all plans and relevant information used in the rating and must ensure that the original stamped plans and two printed copies of the house energy rating software report are returned to the client.

The energy rating only applies to the design for a particular site that the assessor has certified by issuing a report and signing the plans and specifications. After a rating is issued, alterations made to the design (including re-orientation) could vary the energy rating, so the rating would need to be re-calculated by the proponent and the amended rating re-certified.



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7. Maintenance of records

House energy rating assessors are advised to retain an electronic copy of the ratings using the nominated house energy rating software for at least 12 months from the date of the certified rating.

8. Approved Software

All software used must comply with the current version of the ABCB Protocol for House Energy Rating Software; the protocol is available from the Department of Planning and Local Government or the Australian Building Codes Board website www.abcb.gov.au. House energy rating assessors will be notified of any amendments to the software protocol approved for use.

9. Administration of Code of Practice

Administration of this Code of Practice is the responsibility of the Building Advisory Committee as the Registration Authority for this purpose. The Registration Authority may amend the Code of Practice from time to time and house energy rating assessors who have agreed to uphold the Code of Practice will be notified of any amendments.

10. Agreement to the Code of Practice for House Energy Rating Assessors

The attached agreement must be signed and forwarded to:

The Manager
Building Policy
Department of Planning and Local Government
Phone: (08) 8303 0602
GPO Box 1815 ADELAIDE SA 5001
Please keep a copy of the signed agreement and the Code of Practice for your records.

HOUSE ENERGY RATING ASSESSOR'S AGREEMENT (FOR YOUR RECORDS)

1.1 I have passed an examination in the use of software that meets the *ABCB Protocol for House Energy Rating Software – Version 2006.1*.

AND/OR

1.2 I attach evidence of accreditation by a recognised Assessor Accreditation Organisation.

1.3 I wish to be included in the Register of House Energy Rating Assessors maintained by the Registration Authority and recognised as an independent technical expert for the purposes of Regulation 88 of the Development Regulations.

1.4 I undertake to act in accordance with this Code of Practice when certifying house energy rating assessments under the Development Act 1993.

1.5 If requested by the Department of Planning and Local Government, I agree to provide information relating to energy ratings to ensure that assessments are being carried out in a consistent and ethical manner in accordance with the Code of Practice.

1.6 I agree to the Register of House Energy Rating Assessors being made available by the Department of Planning and Local Government and listed on the department website at www.planning.sa.gov.au/go/hera.



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The Manager

Building Policy

Department of Planning and Local Government

GPO Box 1815

ADELAIDE SA 5001



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Signed:

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Dated:

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Name:

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Company Name (if appropriate):

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Address:

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