



# DHW Technical Guideline

## TG001 NATSPEC Specification

### 1. Purpose

This technical guideline supplements *TG035 Specifying by Performance and Example* and provides supporting guidance on meeting the Department of Housing and Works (DHW) requirements for using the National Building Specification (NATSPEC) system to produce specifications for government non-residential building projects.

### 2. Requirements

**The NATSPEC building professional package shall be used to prepare technical specifications for all DHW non-residential projects with an estimated construction value of \$3 million or greater. This requirement applies to all Consultants, including sub-consultants.**

The use of NATSPEC is optional for projects with a construction value less than \$3 million.

### 3. Background

NATSPEC Building Professional package is a comprehensive national specification system that provides standardised design and installation work sections for construction projects.

#### 3.1. Why DHW uses NATSPEC

DHW uses NATSPEC to:

- Ensure standards specified are the latest versions,
- Assist consultants to produce generic specification clauses resulting in high quality, durable products, and
- Support consistency and understanding of the building quality required for government projects.

### 4. How to Use NATSPEC

Download *NATSPEC Quickstart* for an introduction to using NATSPEC worksections to create specifications: <http://www.natspec.com.au/images/PDF/QUICKstart.pdf>

## 4.1. Duplication of information

NATSPEC, particularly workgroup *01 General*, may include information that duplicates or contradicts clauses in DHW's selected Contract. **Consultants shall review these documents and ensure that only relevant NATSPEC worksections and content are included in the project specification to eliminate unnecessary duplication, contradiction and potential for error.**

Where duplication or contradiction occurs between NATSPEC and DHW's selected contract, the latter shall take precedence, and the duplicate information should be omitted from the NATSPEC worksection(s).

For example, work section *0171 General requirements* contain clauses governing authority approvals, which are also covered in DHW's contract Preliminaries for the AS2124 contract. NATSPEC work section 0171 Section 1 *General* Clause 1.7 *Submissions* states:

*"Authority approvals: Notes of meetings with authorities whose requirements apply to the work and evidence that notices, fees and permits have been sought and paid, that authority connections are complete and that statutory approvals by the authorities whose requirements apply to the work have been received."*

This clause is not relevant for DHW projects, as the required approvals will be obtained directly by the DHW project manager.

This may not be the only instance of duplication in worksection 0171. The consultant shall review thoroughly as necessary.

## 4.2. Scheduling

Every project specification should, at a minimum, include the following schedules:

- Schedule of all operation and maintenance manuals which must be delivered as part of Practical Completion.
- Schedule of all warranties which must be provided as part of Practical Completion.
- Schedule of all required tests and inspections, including any hold points.
- Schedule of materials and finishes. The specification/schedule should clearly define the level of quality required, particularly where it exceeds the minimum standards set by the relevant Australian Standard. The installation shall be in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements.

## 4.3. Table of Contents

The specification should include a single table of contents. NATSPEC suggests editing the specification templates in the individual worksection files rather than in the merged file. The master document shall then generate the table of contents and print the full specification. If possible, the table of contents should be hyperlinked to allow easy navigation within the specification.

The level of detail of the table of contents need only include reference to work sections, and not to individual sections and clauses within work sections.

#### 4.4. Formatting

DHW's contract Preliminaries, when used, should be amended as appropriate to suit the project, then combined in a PDF document with the relevant NATSPEC sections and other documentation. Consultants are not expected to format DHW's contract Preliminaries to match NATSPEC. The formatting for NATSPEC individual work sections will be consistent if the natspec.dot file is used.

#### 4.5. Specification by Performance and Example

NATSPEC is a performance-based specification, although it allows for specification by example to be used if required.

Please refer to TG035 Specifying by Performance and Example for guidance on meeting DHW's requirements when specifying either by performance or by example using NATSPEC on government non-residential building projects.

### 5. References

1. *TG035 Specifying by Performance and Example*, Department of Housing and Works  
[TG035 Specifying by Performance and Example \(www.wa.gov.au\)](http://www.wa.gov.au)
2. *Specnotes* NATSPEC's quarterly newsletter contains information on new and revised NATSPEC worksections and technotes, and Australian Standards.
3. NATSPEC *Quickstart* NATSPEC  
<http://www.natspec.com.au/images/PDF/QUICKstart.pdf>
4. NATSPEC *TECHnotes* <http://www.natspec.com.au/index.php/resources/technotes>
5. *Specification Writing* NATSPEC Paper, October 2021  
[http://www.natspec.com.au/images/PDF/Specification\\_Writing\\_Paper.pdf](http://www.natspec.com.au/images/PDF/Specification_Writing_Paper.pdf)
6. *Guide Notes to Assist in The Preparation of the Specification Preliminaries and the Specification Generally for Works Contracts Tendered by the Department of Finance in the Name of the Minister for Works*, Department of Housing and Works
7. *Western Australian Procurement Rules*, [Western Australian Procurement Rules \(www.wa.gov.au\)](http://www.wa.gov.au)

Document Control			
TRIM reference	2015/02812 DOC 01137885		
Revision date	November 2025		
Next revision	November 2026		
Content owner	Building and Technical Services		
Enquiries	Consult with content owner or <a href="mailto:principal.architect@dohw.wa.gov.au">principal.architect@dohw.wa.gov.au</a>		
Revision date	Author	Reason	Sections
27/02/2016	BTS	Initial Release	All
21/02/2017	BTS	Include document reference number (TG001)	Title
13/07/2018	BTS	Update links Revise Version Control Protocol Revise Principal Architect	References Document Control Document Approval
16/11/2018	BTS	Open and Effective Competition Policy product specification hierarchy and requirements clarified.	1.3 Why BMW uses NATSPEC 2.5 Specification by Example.
6/07/2021	BTS	Revise references to BMW Open and Effective Competition Policy product specification hierarchy and requirements clarified.	All 2.5 Specification by Example
23/12/2021	BTS	Updated in relation to TG035 and WA Procurement Rules	All
30/09/2025	BTS	Update to DHW Minor editing updates	All

Document approval
<p>This guideline was endorsed and approved for use on 31/10/2025 by:</p> <p>Dean Wood, Principal Architect</p> <p>Department of Housing and Works</p>

---

#### Disclaimer.

The information in this publication is general and does not take into account individual circumstances or situations. While care has been taken in preparing this document, the State of Western Australia, its agents, or employees, accept no responsibility or liability for decisions or actions taken, or not taken, as a result of any data, information, statement or advice, expressed or implied, contained within. To the best of our knowledge, the content was correct at the time of publishing. The content within should not be relied upon as a substitute for independent legal and other professional advice.