



The Plumbing Code of Australia 2025

The National Construction Code (NCC) consists of three volumes. Volumes one and two contain the technical requirements for the construction of all classes of buildings in Australia. Volume three is the Plumbing Code of Australia (PCA) that sets the technical requirements for the installation of plumbing and drainage systems in Australia. The PCA 2025 came into effect on 1 May 2026 and is available free of charge on the Australian Building Codes Board web site.

How does the PCA fit into plumbing legislation in Western Australia (WA)?

The list below shows how the PCA fits into the hierarchy of WA plumbing regulation, with the legislation above overriding those underneath:

- ▶ The Plumbers Licensing Act 1995.
- ▶ The Plumbers Licensing and Plumbing Standards Regulations 2000 (the Regulations).
- ▶ **The Plumbing Code of Australia.**
- ▶ The AS/NZS 3500 standards, parts 0, 1, 2 and 4.
- ▶ Manufacturers' specifications.

Format of the PCA 2025.

The PCA 2025 replaced the PCA 2022 version on 1 May 2026. All volumes of the NCC have a uniform clause numbering system called, Section-Part-Type-Clause (SPTC), for example B1D2, which details the deemed-to-satisfy provisions for water efficiency.

- ▶ The first letter: Section B.
- ▶ The first number: Part number one (1) in the section.
- ▶ The second letter: Type, deemed-to-satisfy (D).
- ▶ The second number: Clause two (2) within the part.

Clause types of the PCA 2025.

The clause types used in the PCA are as follows:

G = Governing requirement (mandatory)

O = Objective (guidance)

F = Functional Statement (guidance)

P = Performance Requirement (mandatory)

V = Verification Method (optional)

D = Deemed-to-Satisfy Provision (optional)

C = Clause in a Specification

Specification clauses may be mandatory or optional, depending on how they are called up by the NCC.

Informative parts of the NCC are not numbered and do not have numbered paragraphs.

Defined terms in the PCA are in italics and can be accessed by clicking on the term in electronic versions.



What parts of the PCA are regulated plumbing work in WA from 1 May 2026?

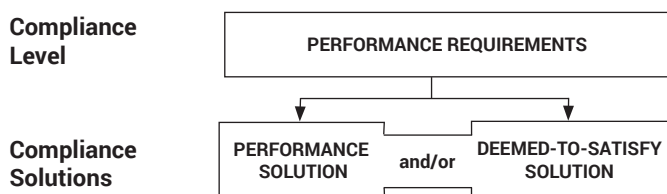
Under the current Regulations, only water supply, sanitary and drainage plumbing work is currently regulated in WA.

Regulation 48 tells us which parts of the PCA relate to plumbing work in WA, as shown below:

- ▶ Section A.
- ▶ Parts B1, B2 (other than clauses B2P12 and B2D4), B3, B5 and B6.
- ▶ Parts C1 and C2.

What are governing requirements?

Governing requirements are a mandatory set of rules that outline how the PCA must be used. Figure A2G1 below shows that a plumbing system may be installed as a deemed-to-satisfy (DtS) solution using AS/NZS 3500, a performance solution or a combination of both to meet the overarching performance requirements in the PCA.



What are performance requirements?

Performance requirements are mandatory technical requirements that tell licensed plumbing contractors how a plumbing system must perform to be compliant. Performance requirements must be met to ensure plumbing systems will be fit for their intended purpose and function correctly. An example of a performance requirement is listed below, taken from part B for cold water services:

B1P7 Uncontrolled discharge

Any failure or uncontrolled discharge from a cold water service must be avoided.

A cold water service installed in accordance with AS/NZS 3500.1:2025 will be a DtS solution to meet this performance requirement.

What does deemed-to-satisfy mean?

DtS provisions are prescriptive rules similar to a recipe that specify how plumbing work must be carried out. They outline the required materials, components, design factors and installation methods that are considered to meet the performance requirements of the PCA.

Key points about DTS provisions:

- ▶ They can be clauses within the PCA as well as mandated Australian standards for detailed guidance.
- ▶ The AS/NZS 3500 series is the most commonly used standard in the plumbing industry.

- ▶ PCA 2025, Schedule 2 lists all referenced documents effective from 1 May 2026, including the updated AS/NZS 3500:2025, parts 1, 2, and 4.

What is a performance solution?

While most plumbing installations in WA follow DTS provisions, the PCA also allows for alternative approaches known as performance solutions. These solutions provide flexibility and encourage innovation, as long as they meet the performance requirements of the PCA.

Key points about performance solutions:

- ▶ They are often used for designs or technologies not anticipated by current DTS standards.
- ▶ Manufacturers or designers may propose new methods that deliver benefits while remaining compliant.
- ▶ They can apply to an entire plumbing system or just part of it and may incorporate some DTS elements.

Additional information and resources can be found on the ABCB website.

What is Quantification?

Quantification is a method of measuring how a performance requirement can be met. Performance requirements can be broad statements and whether the evidence provided in a performance solution is relevant or adequate can be subjective.

The PCA 2025 has included a number of these quantifications for example, a performance requirement in part B heated water services, is as follows:

B2P6 Pressure relief and temperature limitation

Containers used for producing and/or storing heated water are to relieve excessive pressure and avoid flash steam production by—

- relieving pressure so that the maximum rated working pressure, or 1400 kPa, whichever is the lesser, is not exceeded; and
- limiting water temperatures to a maximum of 99 °C; or
- other suitable means providing an equivalent level of safety to (a) and (b).

How do licensed plumbing contractors certify performance solutions in WA?

Before installing a performance solution, a licensed plumbing contractor must ensure the solution has been assessed according to the methods outlined in the PCA.

Acceptable evidence may include:

- ▶ Reports, calculations, or certificates signed by technical experts with the necessary skills and experience.
- ▶ Verification methods listed in the PCA.

- ▶ Documentation confirming the solution meets PCA performance requirements.

Under Regulation 45A, contractors must:

- ▶ Submit a notice of intention for plumbing work involving a performance solution at least five working days before starting work.
- ▶ Provide sufficient supporting evidence to the Plumbers Licensing Board.

For more details, including application guidelines and a case study on drainage performance solutions, visit the Building and Energy website.

www.wa.gov.au/organisation/building-and-energy/building-and-energy

How does a performance solution comply?

Part A2 of the PCA sets out the mandatory governing requirements for compliance. A2G2 lists one or more assessment methods that can be used to show that a performance solution complies with the performance requirements and are as follows:

- ▶ Evidence of suitability.
- ▶ A verification method provided in the PCA.
- ▶ Other verification methods accepted by the appropriate authority.
- ▶ Expert judgement.
- ▶ Comparison with the DtS provisions.

A2G2 (4) states:

Where a performance requirement is proposed to be satisfied by using a performance solution, the following steps must be undertaken:

- Prepare a performance based design brief in consultation with relevant stakeholders.
- Carry out analysis, as proposed by the performance based design brief.

NOTES:

- Some deemed-to-satisfy clauses in the AS/NZS 3500 series were considered matters of public policy and not strictly technical in nature. They have been removed and inserted into the PCA, including B2D5 and B2D6 that set maximum temperatures and types of devices used deliver heated water for personal hygiene purposes. These DtS clauses must be followed in addition to those in referenced documents, such as the AS/NZS 3500 series of standards.

- Evaluate results from (4)(b) against the criteria in the performance based design brief.

- Prepare a final report that includes—

- all performance requirements and/or deemed-to-satisfy provisions identified through A2G2(3) or A2G4(3) as applicable; and
- identification of all assessment methods used; and
- details of steps (4)(a) to (4)(c); and
- confirmation that the performance requirement has been met; and
- details of conditions or limitations, if any exist, regarding the performance solution.

Although the steps above must be followed when choosing a performance solution pathway, the level of detail will depend on the complexity of the performance solution.

Schedules of the PCA

Schedule 1 contains definitions, abbreviations and symbols. These are included in all volumes of the NCC.

Schedule 2 is a table of referenced documents as well as the version and applicable amendments that apply to all volumes of the NCC. For example, AS/NZS 3500.1:2018 version is listed to adopt backflow requirements for top up devices to partially and fully buried rainwater tanks.

Schedules 3 - 11 have references to documents that affect buildings, water and plumbing systems as well as State and Territory variations and additions.

Schedule 11 includes WA variations to the PCA and referenced AS/NZS 3500:2025, Part 2 and Part 4. These are matters specific to WA that suit the state's building approach and other local conditions. They were listed in the Regulations under regulation 49 that has now been deleted.

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