

Interim policy for mitigating the adverse impacts of floods

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Application of the policy

Under section 32 of the *Building Act 1975* and section 13 of the *Building Regulation 2006* a local government may make or amend a local planning instrument or resolution that designates a natural hazard management area (flood) for the purpose of triggering the building assessment provisions relating to flood hazards. This includes the Queensland Development Code Mandatory Part 3.5—Construction of buildings in flood hazard areas.

Section 13(1) of the building regulation sets out matters a local government may declare for all or part of a designated natural hazard management area (flood). When making a designation under a local planning instrument, or by resolution, the matters a local government may declare for the purposes of the building assessment provisions, including Part 3.5, are:

- natural hazard management areas (flood)
- defined flood levels
- maximum flow velocity of water
- inactive flow or backwater areas
- freeboard
- finished floor levels of class 1 buildings.

Section 13(2) of the building regulation requires local governments to comply with this interim policy when designating a natural hazard management area (flood).

Using this interim policy

This interim policy addresses only the methodology for designating a natural hazard management area (flood) for the purpose of the building assessment provisions.

Identifying potential flood hazard

Generally, it is appropriate to use a one per cent annual exceedance probability when determining flood risk within a natural hazard management area (flood). However, it may be appropriate to adopt a different probability or methodology depending on the circumstances of individual localities.

Designation of a natural hazard management area (flood)

A natural hazard management area (flood) is an area identified in a local planning instrument or by resolution that reflects a local government's risk assessment based on the potential flood hazard and the development commitments in a particular locality.

Note: A local government may also declare an inactive flow or backwater area within a natural hazard management area (flood) where the maximum flow velocity of flood waters is expected to be less than 1.5 metres per second.

Glossary

The following terms as defined below are for the purpose of this interim policy.

Annual exceedance probability (AEP): the likelihood of the occurrence of a flood of a given size or larger in any one year; usually expressed as a percentage. For example, if a peak flood discharged 500 cubic metres per second has a probability of five percent it means there is a five percent risk (i.e. probability of 0.05 or a likelihood of 1 in 20) of a peak flood discharge of 500 cubic metres per second or larger occurring in any one year. The probability of a flood event gives no indication of when a flood of that size will occur next.

Class 1 building: has the same meaning as in the National Construction Code.

Defined flood level: the level to which it is reasonably expected flood waters may rise.

Finished floor level: the level of the uppermost surface of a finished floor not including any floor covering, for example carpet or tiles.

Flood: the temporary inundation of land by expanses of water that overtop the natural or artificial banks of a watercourse, for example, a stream, creek, river, estuary, lake or dam.

Freeboard: a height above the defined flood level that takes account of matters that may cause flood waters to rise above the defined flood level. Examples of matters that may cause a flood level to rise above the defined flood level include wave action and localised hydraulic behaviour.

Inactive flow or backwater area: all or part of a natural hazard management area (flood) where the maximum flow velocity of water is not likely to be greater than 1.5 metres per second.

Maximum flow velocity: for all or part of a natural hazard management area (flood), means a flow velocity of water that is reasonably expected to be the maximum flow velocity for all or part of the natural hazard management area (flood).

Natural hazard management area (flood): an area that has been designated as a natural hazard management area (flood) by a local government under section 13 of the building regulation.