



Media Release

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Housing Performance Gap Full of Holes

Rodger Hills, Spokesperson for the Building Verification Forum, commented today on the release of the long-awaited report of the National Energy Efficient Building Project (NEEBP).

“To date, evidence on the performance gap between what gets designed (and approved) and what actually gets built in the residential housing market has emerged on a piecemeal basis,” Mr Hills said.

“While I am pleased about the report’s release, its details are a crying shame and prove that consumers aren’t always getting what they are paying for when they buy a new home or unit.”

The 300 page NEEBP report has sourced extensive evidence from across the house building industry in order to determine the specific issues and put forward over 45 recommendations where urgent action is required from both government and industry in order to bridge the building performance gap.

“Our residential buildings are not performing as predicted and as a result, are not playing their expected role in national carbon reduction and energy efficiency plans,” Mr Hills said.

“The performance gap also hits homeowners in the hip-pocket a second time as utility bills will be higher than expected – meaning high running costs are locked in for the life of the building,” he said.

And the news isn’t just bad for homebuyers. The performance gap increases the risk for mortgage providers who are lending against properties where the real value is less than what the specified and documented value should be.

“Homebuyers need to be assured they are getting the home they have paid for. One that is built to a high standard, performs the way it is supposed to and is as comfortable as the sales brochures claim it would be – but that simply isn’t happening for most people,” Mr Hills continued.

It’s clear there are discrepancies right throughout the construction process - from breakdowns in supply chain communication through to poor installation and inadequate detailing and specification. A lack of teamwork is evident, with tradesmen and professionals all doing their own job and not worrying too much about anybody else’s.



The reasons why the performance gap exists in so many dwellings are varied and complex, which means that nothing less than a cultural revolution is needed.

“That is why the creation of a national Building Verification Council (BVC) is a priority for the industry and an appropriate response to the concerning results outlined in the NEEBP report,” he said.

In addition to helping protect consumers, the BVC will offer regulators, builders, designers and certifiers certainty that the 150,000 (approx.) new dwellings built in Australia each year actually comply with the codes and regulations they are meant to.

The BVC will not be imposing extra stringencies and expenses on builders and homebuyers. It is simply integrating all the existing disjointed building compliance mechanisms into one harmonised and national system. In fact it should realise an improvement in housing affordability by streamlining processes that are currently cumbersome, ineffective and costly to implement.

“With federal and state governments showing at best a wavering commitment, and at worst, open hostility to policies that improve the efficiency, productivity and long-term sustainability of our residential buildings, there has never been a more urgent need for industry to take action through an initiative like the BVC,” Mr Hills concludes.

Twitter Announcement: Housing energy performance gap full of holes – crying shame says Rodger Hills - Building Verification Forum - <http://tinyurl.com/nen57s2>

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About the BVF: The Building Verification Forum is an interim group working towards the establishment of a national Building Verification Council (BVC) within the next 6-12 months. The BVC will enable the residential building industry to respond to increasingly demanding technical standards from consumers, by demonstrating building performance through verification, assurance and testing, instead of just prediction and modelling alone. Its mission is to close the gap between the designed and as-built performance of buildings. For more information about the BVF/BVC initiative visit www.bvc.org.au or <https://www.linkedin.com/company/building-verification-council>