

Update on the review of the Building Code structural provisions

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ABSTRACT: A paper on the review of Clause B1 was presented last year introducing the risk-informed Tolerable Impact Levels (TILs) as part of a building performance matrix. The proposal, including reducing the number of TILs has been updated following work done with engineering reference groups. This paper explains the latest views of MBIE in refining this proposal for wider engagement. The reasons for undertaking this review are further emphasised; namely, the need for a mandate for the level of risk that society is prepared to accept, the necessity in clarity about how buildings should perform with increasing natural hazard event intensities, the need to better reflect geotechnical aspects in the Building Code, the need to address repairs and strengthening requirements for existing buildings, and lastly the need for a broader legislative framework for Building Importance Levels. MBIE are proposing that the natural hazard design levels are based on a nominal design life of 50 years for all new buildings which support the view that a building's level of structural safety should not be varied by the intended design working life. However, it is recognised that there is still a need to maintain a provision for temporary structures. The proposed incorporation of Building Importance Levels (BILs) for structural design purposes into Clause A3 has also been updated to improve designation of building importance, specifically with the provision of legislative linkage to emergency duties of lifeline utilities under section 60 of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002. It does not increase current structural requirements. MBIE envisage that this proposal will address the lack of clarity and specificity concerns expressed about the current Code clause and will establish a policy which structural and geotechnical design building standards will be consistently based on.