

# Factsheet for the Building Code fire safety review 2024

## Background

This factsheet is an overview of the Building Code fire safety review discussion document. This resource is to support people and organisations who want to make a submission.

The Government is committed to make it easier for New Zealanders to build affordable homes and buildings by improving efficiency and flexibility in the building system. Compliance with fire regulations is often seen as the main challenge and source of uncertainty when applying for a building consent.

MBIE is reviewing Aotearoa New Zealand's fire safety requirements in the Building Code, aiming to:

- › align fire safety requirements in the Building Code with the purposes and principles of the Building Act 2004
- › enable flexibility and innovation
- › improve efficiency and cost effectiveness, and
- › provide simple, clear, consistent, and concise requirements.

## Why the work to improve the Building Code fire safety requirements is important

Fire safety is a complex and challenging area and there are significant life safety risks in getting things wrong. Right now, understanding and working through the Building Code fire safety requirements may cause delays in construction, disputes and increase costs. It is important to review these fire safety requirements now, because:

- › of new fire challenges with changes in building use and advances in technology and construction methods and materials

- › showing compliance with fire safety can be difficult, making it unnecessarily harder to build
- › fire safety requirements are hard to find as they are scattered across the Building Code and also in other pieces of legislation.

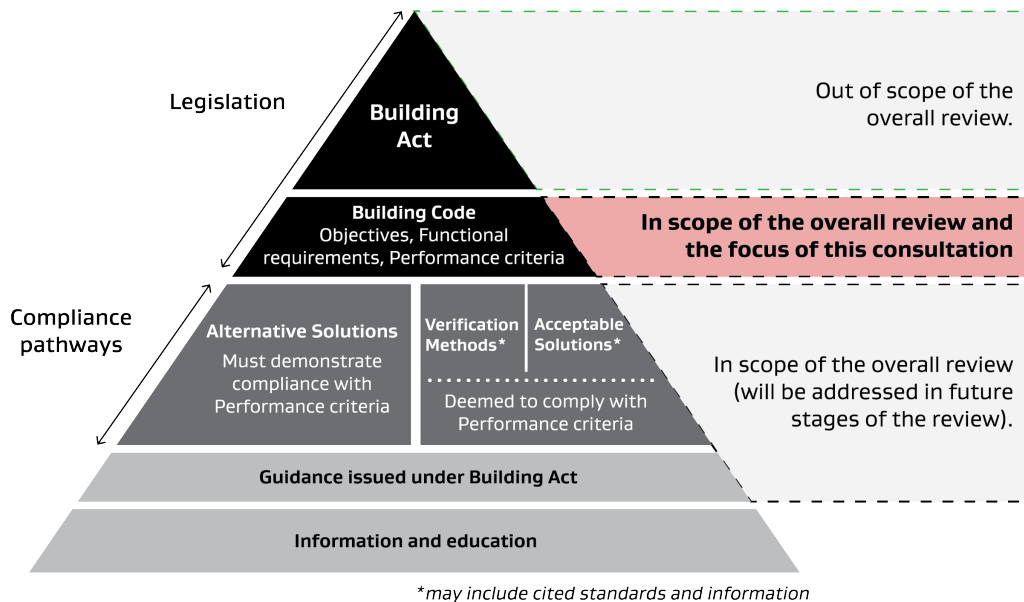
## What the Building Code fire safety review is consulting on

MBIE is seeking feedback on the fire safety requirements in the Building Code and the key issues that are barriers to achieving fire safety objectives. The review aims to build an understanding of the issues as a basis for considering future change. The key issues that have been identified so far are drawn from industry feedback, lessons learnt from historic fire events both in Aotearoa New Zealand and overseas, and international fire safety regulations.

## Scope of the Building Code fire safety review

At the centre of the Building Code fire safety review is its discussion document identifying issues in the Building Code regulations and other related regulations. This includes issues in:

- › the Building Code's C clause Protection from Fire objectives, functional requirements and performance criteria
- › other parts of the Building Code or other regulations under the Building Act that are consequentially impacted by the fire safety provisions
- › the acceptable solutions, verification methods and guidance.



## Fire safety in the Building Code

MBIE identified numerous issues which span several different topics of fire safety which are included in the Building Code. Many issues stem from gaps that are not adequately addressed by the Building Code fire safety provision or are issues which were frequently raised by external stakeholders. The key findings are:

### 1. Effectiveness of fire safety measures in the Building Code

The Building Code regulations support the purposes and principles of the Building Act related to fire safety. However, MBIE is aware some aspects of the regulations do not fully address all risks. These risks may result in greater effects from fire and lower overall level of safety.

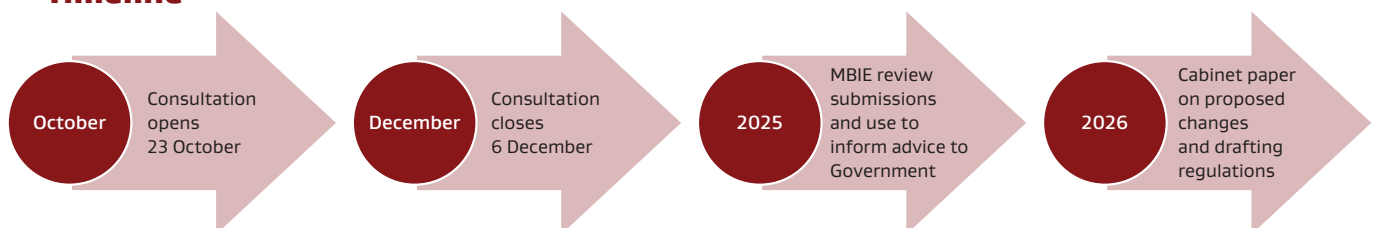
### 2. Keeping pace with new technologies and new fire challenges

Technology, urban design and methods of construction have moved on rapidly since the last review of the fire safety regulations in 2011. The Building Code should enable the use of innovative technologies and designs while providing adequate protection from fire risks. Doing so will provide more flexibility and lower the cost of building products and construction.

### 3. Certainty, clarity, and consistency

The Building Code should provide as much certainty as possible on the building designs that are accepted across the country. The provisions should be clear enough to support consistency in the decisions on whether a building complies with the Building Code. This will provide more efficiency in the process and decision making.

## Timeline



*\*Timelines for the review will depend on the information received in this year's consultation and any new or emerging issues along the way.*

## Have your say on the Building Code fire safety review

The Building Code fire safety review opens for public comment on **23 October and runs until 5pm, Friday 6 December 2024.**



To read the discussion document and for guidance on giving feedback, go to **MBIE's Building Code fire safety review** web page:  
[www.mbie.govt.nz/fire-safety-review](http://www.mbie.govt.nz/fire-safety-review)