

3 August 2015

Australian Building Codes Board  
National Construction Code 2016 Volume 1 Public Comment Draft  
GPO Box 9839  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Australian Building Codes Board

### **Support for the Industry Proposal for Change to the National Construction Code 2016 Volume 1 Public Comment Draft**

I am writing to express the wood products industry's support for the current Industry Proposal for Change (PfC) to the National Construction Code (NCC) 2016 Volume 1 Public Comment Draft, for the inclusion of fire-protected timber construction systems in Class 2 (apartments), Class 3 (hotels) and Class 5 (offices) buildings up to 25 metres in effective height.

AFPA is the peak national body for Australia's forest, wood and paper products industry. We represent the industry's interests to governments, the general public and other stakeholders on the sustainable development and use of Australia's forest, wood and paper products.

Trees are a sustainable biological resource that produce renewable wood products including the development of new and innovative products such as engineered wood products and massive timber construction. They also provide a range of environmental benefits, including the carbon stored over time in the growing forests and harvested products, which also have a high propensity for recycling and reuse. In addition, relative to alternative building materials, wood products have very low embodied energy coupled with very low fossil fuel energy inputs used in their production.

Therefore there are significant number of economic, social and environmental benefits from the greater use of timber and engineered wood products in multistorey buildings.

The inclusion of fire-protected timber construction systems is predicted to yield significant benefits to the construction industry and more broadly in Australia, including:

- **Consumers:** Greater design choice. More competitive market environment. Significant improvement in safety and property through the proposed inclusion of the use of automatic fire sprinkler systems;

- **Builders and Designers:** Provide more rapid and cost effective full construction solutions. Significantly reduce current 'alternative solution' pathway compliance costs. Significant cost savings of gross construction costs by using timber solutions;
- **Planners:** Provide improved mid-rise market solutions. Provide solutions for land which have previously been uneconomic to develop. Provide dramatically reduced site impacts and disruption to neighbourhoods through the construction period;
- **Regulators:** Reduce 'alternative solution' pathway compliance and administrative costs for government. Assists in de-regulating this market sector; and
- **Fire fighters:** Significantly reduce the risk to fire fighters through earlier suppression by automatic fire sprinkler systems and improved containment of potential flashover fires.

The forest and wood products industry looks forward to the inclusion of fire-protected timber construction in the amended NCC 2016.

Yours sincerely



**Mr Ross Hampton**  
Chief Executive Officer