



Inspection of buildings

Part 2: Group titled properties



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- Australian Environmental Pest Managers Association
 - Australian Institute of Architects
 - Australian Institute of Building
 - Australian Institute of Building Consultants
 - Australian Institute of Building Surveyors
 - Australian Roofing Tile Association
 - Australian Window Association
 - Concrete Masonry Association of Australia
 - Consult Australia
 - Engineers Australia
 - Housing Industry Association
 - Insurance Council of Australia
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 - NSW Fair Trading
 - Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
 - Strata Community Australia
 - Think Brick Australia
-

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Australian Standard®

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PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Standards Australia Committee BD-085, Inspection of Buildings.

The objective of this Standard is to provide persons and organizations concerned with inspections of group titled properties with the minimum criteria necessary to facilitate inspections and reports that satisfy the needs of both the client and inspector, and, where applicable, under state or territory legislation.

An inspection in accordance with this Standard identifies the presence of defects as defined in the property. This Standard does not specify or restrict the purposes for which the inspection may be undertaken.

This Standard is part of the AS 4349 series of Standards, which covers minimum requirements for inspection of buildings, as follows:

AS

- 4349 Inspection of buildings
- 4349.0 Part 0: General requirements
- 4349.1 Part 1: Pre-purchase inspections—Residential buildings
- 4349.2 Part 2: Group titled properties (this Standard)
- 4349.3 Part 3: Timber pest inspections

Notes to the text contain information and guidance. They are not an integral part of the Standard.

The terms ‘normative’ and ‘informative’ have been used in this Standard to define the application of the appendix to which it applies. A ‘normative’ appendix is an integral part of a Standard. An ‘informative’ appendix is only for information and guidance.

This Standard includes commentary on some of the clauses. The commentary directly follows the relevant clause, is designated by ‘C’ preceding the clause number and is printed in italics in a box. The commentary is for information and guidance only and does not form part of this Standard.

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FOREWORD

Independent and objective advice is often required to enable informed decisions regarding property purchase, development or maintenance. An inspection may also be necessary where a building is being assessed for release of bond (as defined in Clause 1.4.3), or similar.

It is implicit in this Standard that the inspection includes subjective appraisal by an inspector experienced to identify defects in properties. In any subjective application it is inevitable that different inspectors or the same inspector, on a different occasion, may reach different conclusions. This Standard seeks to provide an appropriate balance between reliability of outcomes, economic constraints and the flexibility required to address different types of group titled properties.

STANDARDS AUSTRALIA

Australian Standard Inspection of buildings

Part 2: Group titled properties

SECTION 1 SCOPE AND GENERAL

1.1 SCOPE

This Standard sets out the minimum requirements for the inspection and preparation of an associated report to identify defects in a group titled property and recommend any further inspections.

This Standard does not require a scope of rectification works or an estimate of the cost of rectification of defects, unless an inspection in accordance with Appendix D is required.

NOTE: State or territory legislation may include requirements beyond this Standard.

Specialist services are not included in the scope of this Standard, e.g. fire safety systems, electrical systems, lift systems.

1.2 APPLICATION

A report prepared in accordance with this Standard is not a certificate of compliance of the property with the requirements of any Act, regulation, ordinance, local law or by-law.

Inspections to this Standard are based on the assumption that the existing use of the building will continue.

Inspections undertaken for release of a bond, shall be in accordance with Appendix D.

NOTE: Only inspections in accordance with Appendix D require a scope of rectification works or an estimate of the cost of rectification of defects

1.3 NORMATIVE REFERENCES

The following are the normative documents referred to in this Standard:

Australian Building Code Board (ABCB)
NCC National Construction Code

1.4 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Standard, the definitions below apply.

1.4.1 Access hole (cover)

Opening in flooring or ceiling or other part of a structure to allow for entry to carry out an inspection, maintenance or repair.

NOTE: For example, a service hatch or removable panel.

1.4.2 Accessible area

Area of the site where sufficient, safe and reasonable access is available to allow inspection within the scope of the inspection.

1.4.3 Bond

Financial security instrument held against the successful completion of a construction project.

1.4.4 Building element

Portion of a building that, by itself or in combination with other such parts, fulfils a characteristic function.

NOTE: Examples of functions include supporting, enclosing, furnishing and servicing building space.

1.4.5 Client

Person or entity for whom the inspection is being carried out.

1.4.6 Defect

Fault or deviation from the intended condition of a material, assembly, or component.

1.4.7 Fair wear and tear

Gradual and expected deterioration to buildings, fixtures and fittings caused by normal usage and over time.

1.4.8 Group titled property

Property divided by title into units owned by individuals and common property owned collectively by owners in the group.

1.4.9 Inspection

Close and careful scrutiny of a building and building elements carried out either without dismantling or with partial dismantling, as required, supplemented by means such as measurement, in order to arrive at a reliable conclusion as to the condition of the building.

1.4.10 Inspector

Person or organization, responsible for undertaking the inspection.

1.4.11 Limitation

Any factor that prevents full or proper inspection of the building.

1.4.12 Maintenance

Regular routine technical and administrative actions, taken during an item's service life, aimed at retaining it in a state in which it can perform its required functions.

1.4.13 Roof space

Space between the roof covering and the ceiling immediately below the roof covering.

1.4.14 Site

Allotment of land on which a building stands.

1.4.15 Structural element

Physically distinguishable part of a structure.

NOTE: For example, a wall, column, beam or connection.

1.4.16 Subfloor space

Space between the underside of a suspended floor and the ground.

SECTION 2 INSPECTION AGREEMENT

2.1 GENERAL

Where an agreement to conduct an inspection in accordance with this Standard has been entered into, the purpose and scope of the inspection shall be defined (refer to Clauses 2.2 and 2.3).

Any subsequent changes to the purpose and scope are subject to agreement by all parties.

2.2 PURPOSE OF INSPECTION

The purpose of the inspection is to provide technical information to the client, an owner, prospective purchaser or other interested party regarding the condition of the property at the time of inspection.

2.3 SCOPE OF INSPECTION

2.3.1 General

The scope of inspection shall comprise visual assessment of the agreed areas of the property to identify all defects at the time of the inspection.

2.3.2 Access to areas for inspection

Safe and reasonable access may be a limiting factor in the definition of the scope of the inspection.

The inspection agreement shall include:

- (a) Arrangements for the right of entry.
- (b) Facilitation of physical entry to the property.
- (c) Supply of necessary information to enable inspection.

Areas where entry is denied for the inspection, or where safe and reasonable access is not available, shall be excluded from the scope of inspection, and do not form part of the inspection.

NOTE: Those areas may be the subject of an additional inspection following the provision of safe and reasonable entry and access (also see Clause 3.2).

2.3.3 Limitations

Limitations that are reasonably expected to be present or that reasonably may occur shall be identified in the scope of inspection.

NOTES:

- 1 The inspector may be able to anticipate many limitations of an inspection.
- 2 Known limitations relating to access should be included.

C2.3.3 *Many disputes between the client and inspector occur because the client did not expect the inspection to be subject to some form of limitation. In order to avoid such disputes, it is necessary that the inspector, who is normally the more knowledgeable party, inform the client during the agreement phase of limitations that may restrict the full achievement of the client's purpose of inspection. The opportunity to inform the client prior to the inspector's visit to the property is limited and there will always remain the possibility of unexpected limitations that will be apparent only when the inspector visits the property. However, it is important that the client have a realistic understanding of the inspection limitations prior to the inspection.*