

NCC 2022's new SPTC referencing system

Attachment A – Evolution of the code's referencing system

The National Construction Code (NCC) currently has two very different referencing systems: the alpha-numeric system used by Volumes One and Three, and the decimal-numeric system used in Volume Two. The alpha-numeric system was adopted from the first edition of the Building Code of Australia (BCA) 1988 (later re-issued as BCA 1990). The decimal-numeric system was devised specifically for the BCA Housing Provisions (BCA Volume Two), introduced in 1996, and was designed to replicate the system used in Australian Standards. The different referencing systems also enabled users to easily tell between BCA Volumes One and Two

In BCA 1990, Section and Part were signified by a letter and number. It was then followed by a decimal point and then a number indicating the clause number within the Part. For example, **E3.1** was the first provision within Part **3** of Section **E**.

Specifications were numbered based on the first provision to call up each Specification. Therefore, if a Specification was first called up by provision C1.1, it was called 'Specification C1.1' (even if also called up by later provisions). Clauses within a Specification were numbered sequentially from 1, sometimes using one or two decimal points (e.g. 1.1, or 1.1.1).

BCA 1990 was a prescriptive code, which meant there was no need to indicate the type of provision as there was generally only one type — a mandatory provision that, if applicable, must be complied with. Hence, the syntax used was Section/Part/Clause (SPC).

The introduction of the performance-based BCA (BCA 1996) brought about the introduction of different 'types' of BCA clause: Objectives, Functional Statements, Performance Requirements and Verification Methods. The prescriptive clauses from BCA 1990 were retained as Deemed-to-Satisfy Provisions.

This necessitated a change to the referencing system to include an additional letter so that users could easily tell which 'type' of clause they were reading. This was integrated into the referencing systems of both BCA Volumes and continues to the current NCC 2019.

BCA 1996 to NCC 2019 – Letters used to indicate clause types

Letter	Clause type	Example Volume One	Example Volume Two
O	Objective	BO1	O2.1
F	Functional Statement	BF1.1	F2.1
P	Performance Requirement	BP1.1	P2.1.1
V	Verification Method	BV1.1	V2.1.1
	Deemed-to-Satisfy Provision	B1.1	3.0.1
	Specification clause	1, 1.1 or 1.1.1	N/A

Note: Volume Three is similar to Volume One, but without Specifications.

As can be seen from the table above, Deemed-to-Satisfy Provisions and Specification clauses were not given a letter prefix. For Volume One, this enabled the referencing of prescriptive clauses from BCA 1990 to be retained unchanged, as a way of smoothing the transition to the performance-based BCA 1996. For Volume Two, the clause type for Deemed-to-Satisfy Provisions was indicated by the number 3 at the beginning of the decimal number.

Volume Three, the Plumbing Code of Australia which was added to the NCC series in 2011, uses essentially the same referencing system as Volume One.