

Sound pressure level requirements for NCC Specification E2.2a – clause 5 – FDAS in Class 2, 3, 4 Occupancies

National Construction Code (NCC), Specification E2.2a, clause 7(a) and (b) provides a concession for the minimum sound pressure level (SPL) required for a building occupant warning system in Class 2 or Class 3 buildings or a Class 4 part of a building.

The concession states that the SPL need not be measured within the sole-occupancy unit (SOU) if the SPL measured at the door providing access to the SOU is not less than 85 dB(A) (Clause 3 Fire Detection and Alarm Systems (FDAS)) or not less than 100 dB(A) (Clause 4 FDAS) respectively.

Specifically, NCC Specification E2.2a clause 7(b) states that this concession applies only to a FDAS installed in accordance with NCC Specification E2.2a clause 4(b). Clause 4(b) states that the smoke detectors must be installed within each SOU and public corridors/other public spaces (subject to the presence of a sprinkler system).

As a NCC Specification E2.2a Clause 5 FDAS permits smoke alarms to be installed in SOUs in lieu of smoke detectors, QFES interpret that the concession allowed in NCC Specification E2.2a clause 7(b) does not apply as the FDAS does not satisfy the requirements of NCC Specification E2.2a clause 4(b).

QFES has sought clarification in writing from the Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB), publishers of the NCC, regarding QFES' interpretation but no written response has been received.

Therefore, until such time as the ABCB responds to QFES' query in writing or NCC Specification E2.2a clause 7 is updated to reflect a Clause 5 FDAS, QFES' position is that the proposed Clause 5 FDAS SPL must be measured within the SOU and achieve the requirements of AS 1670.1 Clause 3.22 (as referenced by clause 7).