

Self-storage buildings with rise-in-storeys greater than one

As house and property sizes decrease within cities, people require storage solutions for their possessions. To satisfy this demand, multi-level Class 7b self-storage facilities are the subject of frequent building development applications submitted for referral advice. However, due to the common use of Type C lightweight construction, large volume of contents, with the potential of the storage of dangerous and/or highly flammable goods, and the ability for a fire to rapidly spread beyond the unit of origin, there exists the high probability for an extremely dangerous and challenging environment for firefighters in the event of a fire.

A safe workplace is a fundamental issue for firefighters working within the built environment and by advising the installation of special fire services within buildings that involve special hazards, such as multi-level self-storage facilities, QFR is creating a safer workplace for firefighters.

QFR considers that a Class 7b building used as a self-storage facility with a rise in storey of more than one could present special problems of fighting a fire in the building. The Assessment Manager for a building development application should consider the National Construction Code (NCC), clause E1D17¹ and clause E2D21² (Provision for special hazards) and determine the appropriateness of the installation of, for example,

- an automatic sprinkler system to AS 2118.1 suitable to the hazard class of the subject building, to ensure compliance with clause E1D17,
- a monitored fire detection and alarm system to AS 1670.1, to ensure compliance with clause E2D21.

Where appropriate, these may be submitted to QFR as a performance solution referral which addresses relevant performance requirements of the NCC. For further information, see QFR Position Statement at

www.fire.qld.gov.au/compliance-and-planning/referral-agency-advice/referral-agency-advice-guidelines/guide-performance-solutions/position-statements#self_storage

¹ NCC 2022 E1D17

² NCC 2022 E2D21