

Fact Sheet

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Essential Building Services

What has changed?

- The requirement to have an annual assessment and the requirement to display the Form 56 at the entrance to the building has been removed.
- Reducing costs by establishing a maintenance schedule based on risk rather than simply doing the maintenance annually.

What happens now?

- Under the new *Building Act 2016*, building owners are responsible for setting up and conducting a maintenance schedule for essential building services.
- The emphasis is on undertaking maintenance in line with a schedule of essential maintenance tasks.
- There will be random checks (audits) to ensure that the maintenance tasks have been undertaken, records will need to be available for inspection whenever requested by the Director of Building Control, an authorised officer or by the Tasmanian Fire Service.

Requirements for the maintenance of new building work

The detailed requirements for what needs to be included in the maintenance schedule is contained in the [Directors Maintenance of Prescribed Essential Building Services Determination Dec 2016](#)

For new buildings or alterations or additions to existing buildings, the building surveyor who issues the Occupancy Permit for the building, determines a Maintenance Schedule of prescribed essential services specific to the particular building.

The regular maintenance of the prescribed essential safety measures such as fire safety, exits and airflow will ensure that they will remain operational throughout the life of the building. Thereby ensuring that safety systems will operate reliably in the event of an emergency, and therefore minimising the risk to the safety or health of the occupants or users of the building.

The Schedule will describe what are the particular maintainable essential building services of each building and determine the performance level to which each is required to perform. It will also reference the frequency of testing or inspection as specified by the Director of Building Control for each maintainable essential service.

Requirements for maintenance of existing buildings

The requirement for all owners to maintain prescribed essential building services first became law in July 2004 under the former Act. For owners of all existing buildings that meant establishing what are the features or measures for their building, performing the required regular maintenance and also doing an annual Form 56 process.

You no longer need to do the Annual check, but you still need to maintain the essential building services. The schedule created under the old Act can be used as the ongoing maintenance schedule, or you may wish to have it updated by a Building Surveyor in line with the new Determination.

If you own an existing building and do not have a schedule of maintenance then it is necessary for you to engage a building surveyor to create a Maintenance Schedule and to determine the ongoing maintenance requirements. The approved Form 46 for new building work may be adapted for this purpose.

Who can perform the required maintenance work?

The type of maintenance required of the essential services will depend on the results of inspections performed and the complexity of the feature or measure included in a building.

There is no direct licensing of persons who perform the regular inspection and maintenance work under either the *Building Act 2016* or the *Occupational Licensing Act 2005*. The level of skills of the persons performing checking of the essential building services will therefore depend on the complexity of each type of service or feature.

For some types of simple safety features an employee could undergo some basic training or induction to understand what they are checking and why this work is being performed. For example, whether the latch on a fire exit door is working correctly and paths of travel to that door are not obstructed could be checked by an appropriate employee.

If, however, the testing and maintenance of a safety feature involves electrical, mechanical, fire protection or other technical skills then a contractor who possesses specialist skills must perform the maintenance.

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