

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Strong energy targets for buildings could deliver emissions and power savings in Australia's Top End: New report

**Thursday 29 November 2018**

A more stringent National Construction Code with stronger energy performance targets would reduce emissions and power bills for buildings in Northern Australia, according to a new report released today by ASBEC and ClimateWorks Australia.

The report, *Built to Perform in Northern Australia* sets out potential energy performance targets in the National Construction Code specific to Queensland, Northern Territory and Northern Western Australia's unique climates.

"The hot tropical and desert climatic conditions of Northern Australia really put buildings to the test when it comes to energy consumption. But these challenges actually provide a unique opportunity to reduce Australia's emissions and save money – if governments act to make it happen," said ASBEC Executive Director Suzanne Toumbourou.

"We have modelled the opportunities provided by different building types, including apartments, free standing houses, hospital wards and schools. Even without changing the standard design of these buildings, the report found energy savings of up to 27 per cent in residential buildings, 38 per cent in commercial sector, and 56 per cent in public sector buildings such as schools."

"Improved energy performance of buildings presents a win-win-win opportunity by reducing stress on the electricity network, offering bill savings and supporting a least-cost pathway to a zero carbon built environment, while improving health and resilience outcomes for households and businesses."

ClimateWorks Project Manager Michael Li said previous analysis showed that nationwide changes to the National Construction Code could save Queenslanders \$6 billion in energy bills between now and 2050, \$430 million for the Northern Territory and \$4 billion in Western Australia. At the same time, it would reduce emissions by 19 million tonnes, 2 million tonnes and 10 million tonnes respectively.

"Implementing the energy targets in *Built to Perform in Northern Australia* will enable each state and territory to unlock these savings," he said.

Suzanne Toumbourou said "We have got the right tool to strengthen energy performance in the National Construction Code – if governments will use it. Right now, industry leaders are delivering buildings that perform far better than the Code's minimum standards but increased minimum energy requirements in the 2022 revisions to the Code will deliver industry the certainty to roll this out nationwide – and drive down costs. At the same time, state and territory governments should encourage building materials and designs which are best suited to specific local environments."

### Available for comment

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## **About the Report**

*Built to Perform in Northern Australia* is an addendum to *Built to Perform - An industry led pathway to a zero carbon ready building code*, Trajectory Project published in July 2018.

These reports present the results of the Building Code Energy Performance Trajectory project, which quantifies the opportunities of establishing a clear, consistent and ambitious long-term plan for the energy requirements in the National Construction Code. *Built to Perform in Northern Australia* is informed by the modelling for three different residential building types in climate zones 1, 2 and 3; and five different non-residential building types in climate zones 1 and 2. It investigated the costs and benefits to society of simple energy efficiency and on-site renewable energy opportunities. The analysis assessed upfront costs associated with improvements, as well as benefits from reduced energy bills, downsizing of heating, cooling and ventilation equipment, and reduced network costs.

This report was produced with the generous support of the Northern Regional Development Australia Alliance (NRDAA) and the Queensland Government, and delivered in partnership with Energy Action and Team Catalyst.

## **About ASBEC**

The Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council (ASBEC) is a collective of leading industry organisations committed to a sustainable built environment in Australia. ASBEC's membership consists of a range of key industry government and academic organisations who are involved in the planning, design, delivery and operation of our built environment and who are concerned with the economic, social and environmental performance of the sector.

ASBEC's activities, including research and policy development on built environment issues, are an example of a collaborative, co-ordinated approach undertaken across all segments of the built environment. ASBEC works actively to develop and promote leading practice in the design, planning and operation of our cities, at a buildings, precincts and citywide scale.

## **About ClimateWorks**

ClimateWorks Australia is an expert, independent adviser, acting as a bridge between research and action to enable new approaches and solutions that accelerate Australia's transition to net zero emissions by 2050. It was co-founded in 2009 by The Myer Foundation and Monash University and works within the Monash Sustainable Development Institute.

In the pursuit of its mission, ClimateWorks looks for innovative opportunities to reduce emissions, analysing their potential then building an evidence-based case through a combination of robust analysis and research, and clear and targeted engagement. They support decision makers with tailored information and the tools they need, as well as work with key stakeholders to remove obstacles and help facilitate conditions that encourage and support Australia's transition to a prosperous, net zero emissions future.