



# ADVISORY NOTICE BUILDING

11/06

Advisory Notices are issued to assist in the interpretation of the Development Act 1993

September 2006

## TECHNICAL:

### Development Regulations 1993 Floor drainage in wet areas

The purpose of this Advisory Notice is to provide advice and clarification regarding when a drainage outlet is required in a bathroom floor.

#### BACKGROUND

There is varying opinion on whether or not a floor waste is required in the floor of a bathroom, outside a shower area. An anomaly has been identified in the wording of clause G.8.1 of the South Australian Housing Code (SAHC) and clause 2.1 of Minister's Specification SA F1.7. Planning SA is aware of this anomaly, and it will be corrected in Amendment 14 in May 2007.

#### WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

The problem is that clause G.8.1(a)(iii) of the SAHC says that if a room contains a shower, the floor must be drained to a floor waste or untrapped floor drain. The same occurs in clause 2.1(a) of Minister's Specification SA F1.7.

Clause G.8.1(c) provides a concession which dispenses with the requirement to drain the wet area floor to a floor waste, as long as all sanitary fixtures within the room are provided with in-built overflow protection.

The definition of *sanitary fixture* states that for the purpose of the SA Housing Code a shower is not a sanitary fixture.

Therefore, the concession provided by G.8.1(c) has no effect on a room containing only a shower—because there are no sanitary fixtures within the room.

#### WHAT WAS INTENDED?

Where a room contains a shower, and all fixtures in the room are provided with in-built overflow protection connected to the sanitary fixture drainage, then a floor waste is not considered necessary for the following reasons:

- The floor waste is to protect the floor of the bathroom outside of the shower area (enclosed or unenclosed) from accidental overflow of water from the sanitary fixture within the room—that is, if somebody leaves the plug in a sanitary fixture such as hand basin or bath, with the taps running, any water overflowing onto the floor of the room will drain into the floor waste.



Therefore, if the basin or bath has in-built overflow protection, there is reduced likelihood of water flowing onto the floor.

- The shower already has an unplugged shower waste, therefore there is minimal likelihood of accidental overflow. Further, if it is an enclosed shower water from the shower outlet is confined to the shower enclosure and there is minimal likelihood of water accumulating on the floor and needing to be drained. If the shower is unenclosed, the area of the shower is enlarged and that area must drain to the shower waste. The bathroom floor outside of the shower area must still comply with the requirements of the BCA / SAHC and the floor may drain to the shower waste where there are no overflows incorporated in the sanitary fixtures.

#### **ADVICE**

Clause G.8.1(c) of the SAHC and clause 2.1(c) of the Minister's Specification clearly state that drainage of a wet area floor to a floor waste is not required when all sanitary fixtures within the room are provided with in-built overflow protection. Therefore, in a room containing an enclosed or unenclosed shower<sup>1</sup> and other sanitary fixtures such as a bath and/or basin, as long as all sanitary fixtures within the room are provided with in-built overflow protection, drainage of the floor to a floor waste is not required.

The current wording requires a floor waste in a room containing only a shower where there are no other sanitary fixtures in the room. This is not the intention as there are no sanitary fixtures to overflow and flooding of the floor is a non-issue.

However, until the wording is changed in Amendment 14 in May 2007, Planning SA suggests that if an applicant wishes to dispense with the floor waste in the floor of a room containing only a shower, it would be reasonable to consider an alternative solution.

The relevant performance requirements are:

#### **P2.4.1 Wet areas**

To protect the structure of the building and to maintain the amenity of the occupants, water must be prevented from penetrating—

- (a) behind fittings and linings; or
- (b) into concealed spaces,

of sanitary facilities, bathrooms, laundries and the like.

#### **SA 3.1**

Floors in bathrooms, or rooms containing a shower or a sanitary facility, must be installed in a manner that will prevent accumulation of water on the surface which could create unhealthy or hazardous conditions.

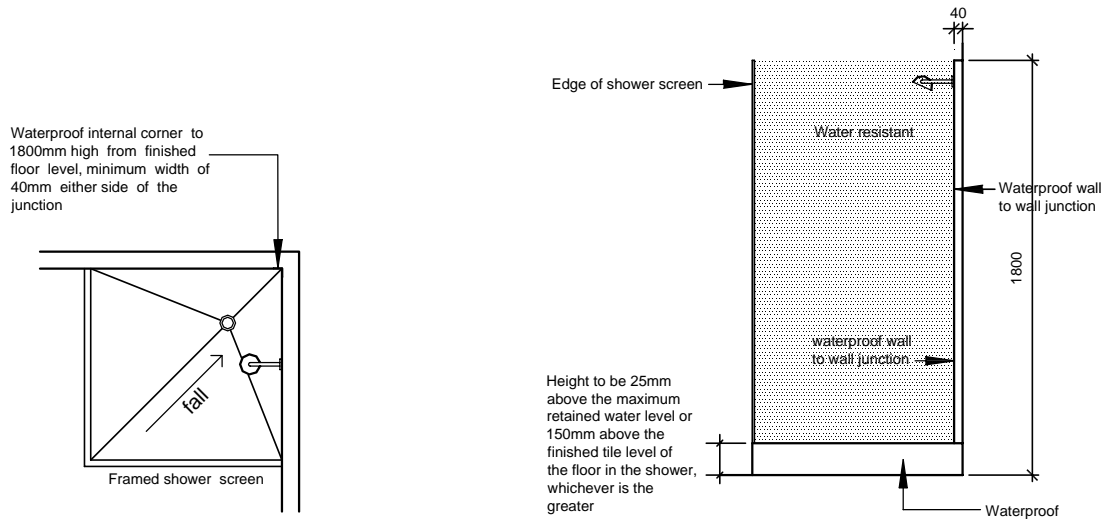
Performance Requirement P2.4.1 is concerned with preventing water penetration behind fittings and linings and into concealed spaces. Therefore, if water in the shower area is drained to a shower waste

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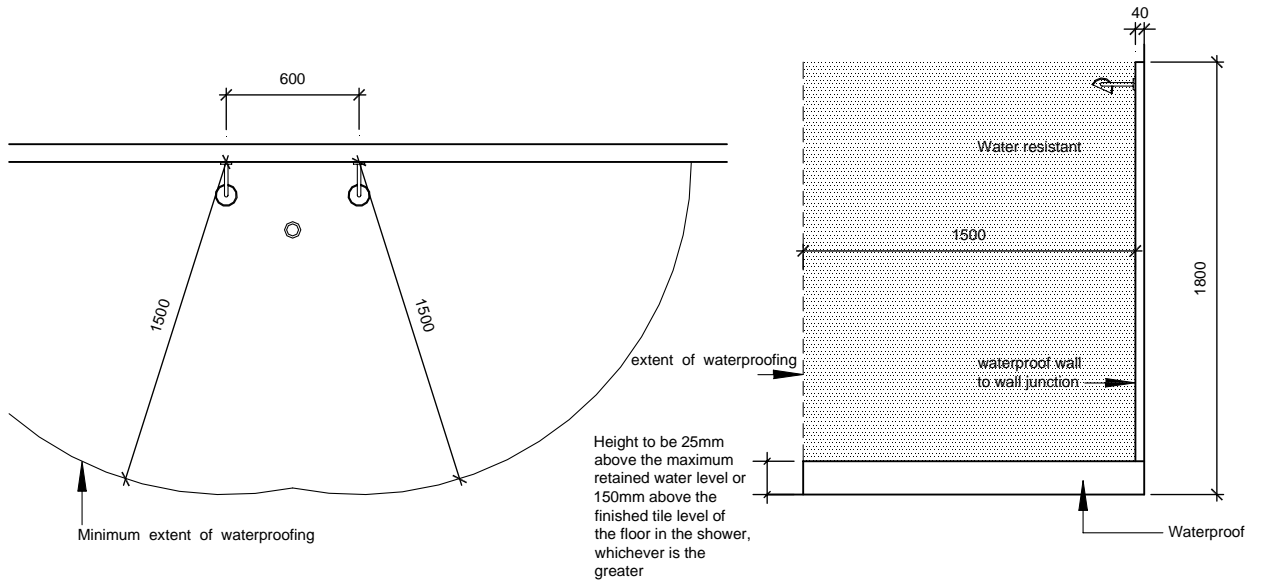
<sup>1</sup> South Australian Housing Code clause G.8.1 and Minister's Specification SA F1.7 clause 1.1.

such that there is very little likelihood of this happening, then the performance requirement has been met.

It is important to note that performance requirement SA 3.1 does not prohibit water on a floor, but the solution must be such that sufficient water cannot accumulate such that it would be unhealthy or hazardous. So if water can be contained within a fixture (without overflowing) or within a shower area, then the performance requirement can be met.



**Enclosed Shower**



**Unenclosed Shower**

**Further information**



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**ISSN: 1443-8038**