

NCC 2022's web content accessibility changes

The 2022 edition of the National Construction Code (NCC) comes with some important changes to its structure and format, as part of the Australian Building Codes Board's (ABCBC) commitment to delivering a code that is user-friendly and modern. This supporting document provides a snapshot summary of what to expect with the web content accessibility changes.

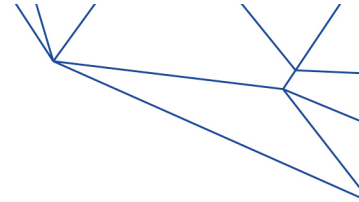
Background

As an Australian government agency, the ABCBC is required to meet at least Level AA of the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1](#). These guidelines ensure content is accessible to a wider range of people, and apply to web content on desktops, laptops, tablets and mobile devices. For example, content must be structured in a way that ensures it can be read by digital screen reader technology, should users require it.

A broader benefit of adhering to these guidelines is that the NCC Online content will become inherently more usable and easier to digest. Moreover, an NCC with WCAG accessible content provides a path to greater machine-readability, which in turn drives product innovation and forms part of the ABCBC's [improved NCC useability initiative](#).

What's changing?

Improvements will be made to the visual display of information in NCC 2022. For example, in previous editions, tables were sometimes used to visually arrange text, rather than for



presenting tabular data. Tables also contained very complex arrangements of merged cells, blank cells and multiple layers of column headers.

An example would be **Table D2.16a** in NCC 2019 Volume One. While this table might be readable in print or on a desktop, if viewed through a mobile device, or interpreted via a screen reader, it is much more difficult to decipher.

In NCC 2022, non-tabular text will be presented primarily as clauses, rather than within tables. Tables will also be simplified and, where necessary, split, to limit the use of merged cells and header levels. This makes clauses and tables both easier to interpret and more recognisable by presenting them in a uniform way.

Once tables are used only for tabular data, they can be displayed more effectively and in a device-specific manner, making them more user-friendly.

Benefits

While your new NCC may look a bit different at first, the features and benefits will go long way in better supporting NCC users in achieving compliance.

Features	Benefits
WCAG 2.1 compliant content	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Easier to read and reference✓ Enables greater comprehension of the intent of the code✓ Broadens understanding of the NCC to new entrants to the building and plumbing industries and non-technical readers✓ A better user experience✓ The NCC as a product of the ABCB meets its accessibility requirements

More resources

The ABCB has developed [a range of resources](#) to support you with the changes to the NCC's structure and format, ahead of Public Comment in May 2021. Public Comment is your opportunity to have input on the content of NCC 2022, but please note you must be an [NCC registered user](#) to provide comment.