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## New design guide supports NSW building reforms

***In the wake of major NSW legislative and regulatory reforms to improve building quality and safety, three peak bodies have released a landmark guide for design practitioners and engineers.***

Consult Australia, Engineers Australia and the Australian Institute of Architects have joined forces to develop the *Guide for design practitioners and engineers* to help their members tackle the recent NSW *Building Confidence* reforms.

The guide is a practical resource that highlights key issues relevant to contracts and professional indemnity (PI) insurance relating to the recent legislative and regulatory changes.

There are multiple new obligations on design practitioners, engineers and building practitioners throughout the life of a building under the NSW *Design and Building Practitioners Act 2020* (the D&BP Act) and the *Design and Building Practitioners Regulation 2021* (the D&BP Regulation).

The three peak bodies have worked closely with the NSW Government and authorities on the reforms which aim to ensure better compliance with the Building Code of Australia underpinned by higher quality design documentation in a positive step towards rectifying issues that have had significant negative impacts on consumers and building industry practitioners.

Australian Institute of Architects NSW Chapter President, Laura Cockburn, urged architects and other design and construction professionals to take full advantage of the new guide, saying “We are determined to continue driving quality and safety improvements in our built environment.”

“This new legislative framework is an important step in that process that will also rebuild consumer confidence and augment the safeguards detailed design documentation brings to any project, but particularly projects at scale.”

Consult Australia CEO Nicola Grayson noted “The interplay between contractual obligations and PI insurance policies is a critical issue for our members that must be considered before signing any contract.”

“This guide helps design practitioners and engineers understand this interplay in the context of the latest NSW reforms.”

Engineers Australia Chief Engineer Jane MacMaster said “The building reform agenda in NSW encapsulated by the D&BP Act and Regulations will help to ensure buildings are built to the high standard expected by our communities. This guide will assist design practitioners and engineers with their role and obligations in the new regulatory environment.”

Matt Press, Director, Office of the Building Commissioner has supported the work by the industry bodies.



Australian  
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*“The implementation of the Design and Building Practitioner Act creates new roles, responsibilities and liabilities for many players. It’s so important that these are reflected in contracts to make sure clients, designers and engineers are on the same page and we minimise disputes. The Australian Institute of Architects, Consult Australia and Engineers Australia have shown great industry leadership to produce a one stop shop for practice-focussed guidance.”*

A copy of the *Guide for design practitioners and engineers* is available on the following websites: [Consult Australia](#), [Engineers Australia](#) and [Australian Institute of Architects](#).

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