

AUS-SPEC Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the status of previous AUS-SPEC licences?

NATSPEC has no responsibility regarding pre-September 2007 licences and therefore assumes your past licence conditions still hold. Under the new licence subscribers may NOT distribute editable versions of AUS-SPEC to non-subscribers.

2. How does the pre-September 2007 and new AUS-SPEC differ?

This [Comparison table](#) lists the old AUS-SPEC specification numbers and titles with the new specification numbers and titles, together with their location in New packages.

3. Where do I find AUS-SPEC # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6A and 6B?

AUS-SPEC # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6A and 6B are now part of different AUS-SPEC packages. Refer to the [Comparison table](#).

4. Can AUS-SPEC be distributed?

Councils may distribute, in non-editable formats, amended relevant worksections to consultants or contractors who undertake works for Council or works which Council later accepts, such as residential subdivisions, and will not be in contravention of the licence agreement. However, if the receiver is expected to produce and be responsible for a specification based on AUS-SPEC, a relevant NATSPEC subscription should be a condition of engagement. This ensures their information is up-to-date and in line with the requirements of Council. Currently state, territory and federal government bodies check that consultants are subscribers by viewing the subscriber list on www.natspec.com.au. If their consultant is not a subscriber, Council then requests the consultant to become a subscriber. Usually this requirement is part of the Council's contract with the consultant.

Councils assist in protecting AUS-SPEC copyright by not distributing the specification in a manner that allows it to be downloaded by those not involved in the projects. It is recommended that if you wish to place pdf versions of your specification on your website, it needs to be within a secure section requiring registration. This does not necessitate individual passwords.

As a not-for-profit organisation NATSPEC depends on subscription income to fund updating and development of information. Without consultants paying for the specifications the price to Local Councils will need to be increased.

5. Buying a single worksection

If a consultant/contractor is asked by Council to comply with AUS-SPEC for a single project, and he does not wish to subscribe to the AUS-SPEC packages but requires a single worksection for the specific project in hand then, a single worksection can be purchased for \$99 (including GST) instead of subscribing to a full package. This worksection will not be updated. It is the purchaser's responsibility to ensure they have the latest version.

6. What is included in each package?

AUS-SPEC is available in seven packages. The following packages are available *Complete* which includes all the packages, *Contracts, Urban and open spaces, Buildings, Roadworks and bridges, Public utilities and Maintenance (non-parks)*.

7. What does each package consists of?

The Matrix on the web <http://www.natspec.com.au/Documents/AUS-SPEC%20worksection.pdf> provides a complete list of worksections included as part of each package and enables a comparison of packages.

8. Where can I find 306U?

306U *Road openings and restorations utilities* was in the old version of AUS-SPEC#1. It is now aligned to the National Classification System with the new classification number of 1152 *Road openings and restorations (utilities)*. Refer to the [Comparison table](#).

9. Can I use SPECbuilder Live for AUS-SPEC?

SPECbuilder Live is available for AUS-SPEC subscribers. Subscribers can access SPECbuilder Live through the [homepage](#) of the NATSPEC website. [SPECbuilder Live guide](#), a step-by step guide is also available on the web.

10. What is SPECbuilder?

SPECbuilder is a specification compilation software program that enables subscribers to:

- create new specifications using AUS-SPEC and office-edited worksections
- edit, merge and set styles for specification documents
- organise and add existing project specifications to a Project list
- add Council specific information to your specifications.

SPECbuilder Live is the online version of NATSPEC specification compilation software. This browser based version of SPECbuilder allows draft specifications to be compiled from NATSPEC master files which are located online. It is compatible with all versions of Windows, Macintosh and Linux operating systems. The file formats are Word 07 which can be used with MS Office or OpenOffice.

SPECbuilder Pro is the offline version of NATSPEC specification compilation software. It is delivered via CD-ROM and is installed on the user's computer. It is compatible with Windows versions up to XP and Microsoft Word versions up to 2003.

Please see [QUICKstart](#) for more information.

11. What is the difference between NATSPEC and AUS-SPEC?

The NATSPEC specification system is for all building structures with specialist packages for architects, interior designers, landscape architects, structural engineers, service engineers and domestic owners. AUS-SPEC is the Local Government specification system for the life-cycle management of assets. AUS-SPEC packages include Contracts, Urban and Open Spaces, Buildings, Roadworks and Bridges, Public Utilities, and Maintenance. AUS-SPEC Buildings package includes the NATSPEC Building Basic and AUS-SPEC Urban and Open Spaces includes the NATSPEC Site package. Each AUS-SPEC package includes the appropriate design, construction and maintenance worksections for each asset.

12. What is a worksection?

A worksection is a section of the works, trade or working sequences on-site. Worksections or trade sections are of contractual interest to the contractors and of practical interest to the subcontractors and suppliers.

13. How do I know whether it is a NATSPEC or an AUS-SPEC worksection?

All AUS-SPEC worksections have the suffix (AUS-SPEC) to identify the AUS-SPEC worksections in the *Worksection matrix* where both AUS-SPEC and NATSPEC worksections are in the same workgroup e.g. workgroups 1-3. The following workgroups give a distinction between NATSPEC and AUS-SPEC worksections.

Workgroup 00 *Planning and design* is exclusively for AUS-SPEC design worksections.

Workgroups 01 - 03 include NATSPEC and AUS-SPEC building construction worksections.

Workgroups 04 - 09 include NATSPEC building construction worksections.

Workgroups 11-13 include entirely AUS-SPEC construction worksections and

Workgroups 14-18 include entirely AUS-SPEC maintenance worksections.

14. Can I use AUS-SPEC for different types of contracts?

AUS-SPEC can be used for the following types of contracts:

- Conditions of contract (Tendering)
- Quality control: Quality System (Assurance) or Integrated Management System Control
- Method of Payment: Schedule of Rates or Lump Sum.

15. What are TECHguides?

TECHguides provide roadmaps and examples of the documentation to be compiled for local government projects. The classification of TECHguides is based on the National classification system. They include information on contracts, technical specifications and tender submission requirements. They should be read prior to commencing a project's documentation. They are included in the Reference documents section of SPECbuilder Pro in pdf format and can be printed as required.

16. Can the TECHguides be customised?

TECHguides are reference documents and cannot be customised.

17. How do I know what has changed since the last Update?

The AUS-SPEC *Update summary* available in the reference documents section of the CD and download section in SPECbuilder Live, provides a summary of the global changes made to all the worksections as well as a detailed summary of changes on a clause by clause basis since the last update. The AUS-SPEC pdf documents also show the changes as highlighted text since the last update.

18. How can I provide feedback or be involved in the AUS-SPEC review process?

Simply write to us at aus-spec@natspec.com.au.

19. What is a TECHreport and a TECHnote?

A TECHreport e.g. *Specifying ESD* is an in depth report prepared by NATSPEC providing general information on specification writing, and technical information that relates to ESD for more than one worksection.

A TECHnote is a one or two page note prepared by NATSPEC providing general information on specification writing or technical information relating to more than one worksection. TECHnotes are grouped into three categories: General (GEN), Design (DES) and Products (PRO).

20. What is green or Guidance text in the worksections?

Guidance Text is included in the worksection file to assist or prompt the specification writer regarding content. It appears as boxed, green text unless hidden. *Guidance* can be displayed, hidden and/or permanently deleted using the NATSPEC toolbar. Delete Hidden text prior to issuing the final document. *Guidance* text which is provided as sample text for inclusion in a customised specification is shown in italics. For example:

Depending on location and condenser configuration, the entry of foreign matter may be a problem. For such situations consider including the following:

Coil grilles: Provide corrosion protected grilles to prevent birds and foreign matter entering the coils.

21. Can I customise the worksections?

AUS-SPEC worksections are only templates. For each project the specifier will need to select the appropriate worksections and edit the material to suit the project. This may include deleting inappropriate material or adding text. It is the responsibility of the user to ensure it is completed appropriately and checked for its applicability for local conditions and regulations.

22. What do I do if there is no worksection to cover what I require?

You can create your own worksections and give it a four digit number so that it aligns to the NATSPEC classification structure and is located in the appropriate workgroup. If the content required for the project does not exist in the current NATSPEC worksections, either add required text to the existing worksections or provide new worksections using the NATSPEC structure, terminology and format.

23. Can I change the 'Pay Items' to align with our internal schedules?

Yes. You can change and also add additional pay items to the **Pay items** clause of each worksection but you need to ensure that the **Pay items** aligns with the *0151 Schedule of rates* worksection.