

# NATSPEC Specification Wordprocessing & Production

Tips and tricks on how to use SPECbuilder Pro  
and some Microsoft Word features that help  
with the production of specifications

Prepared by

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## SPECBUILDER PRO

## 1 SPECBUILDER PRO

*Specbuilder Pro* enables Windows users to

- create new specifications using NATSPEC and office edited worksections
- edit, merge and set styles for your specification documents
- organize and add existing project specifications to your project list

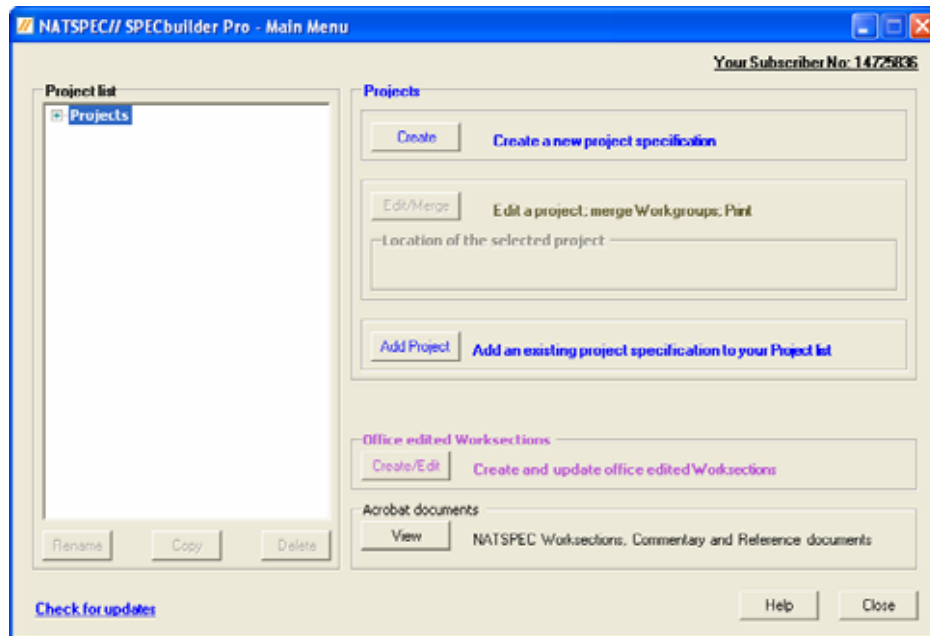


Figure 1 – SPECbuilder Pro – Main Menu

### 1.1 Create a new project specification

To create a new project specification click on the **Create** button.

The **Create a new project** dialog box appears. Here is where you select all the worksection that will be part of your new specification. Just click on each of the Workgroups, choose a Subgroup and check the Worksections that are required. As you select the worksection they appear on the far right hand side so you can see your selections. Once you have completed selecting click on the **Save Project** button and give your project a name (see Figure 2).

In the **Save a project** dialog box you can also choose where on your system you want to save the project. This may be local (on your own computer) or on a Server. In this dialog there is a **Set Styles** button which allows you to choose which Microsoft Word Template file you want to base your project on (more on Templates following) (see Figure 3). The Set Styles dialog box also gives you the option on whether or not you want to consecutively number the file or if you want each worksection numbered individually (see Figure 4).

SPECBUILDER PRO

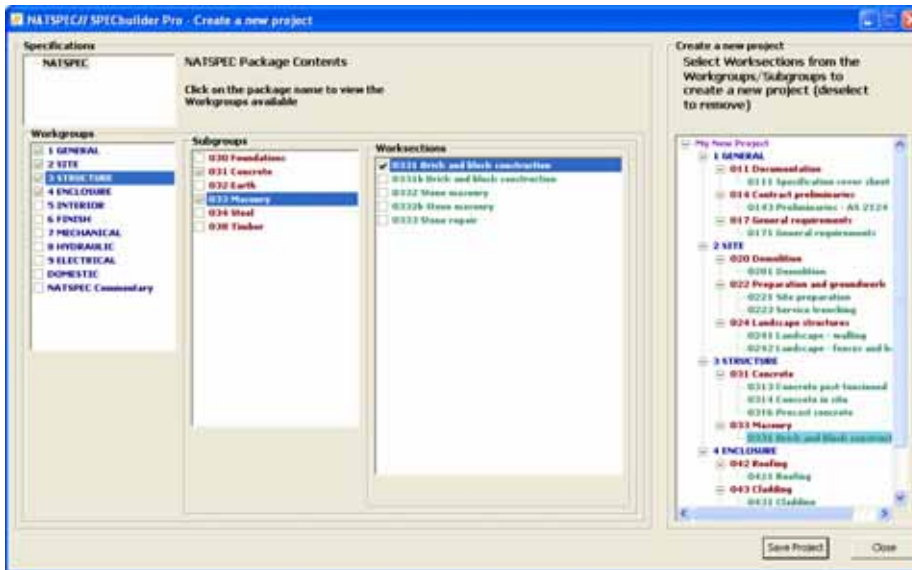


Figure 2 – Create a new project

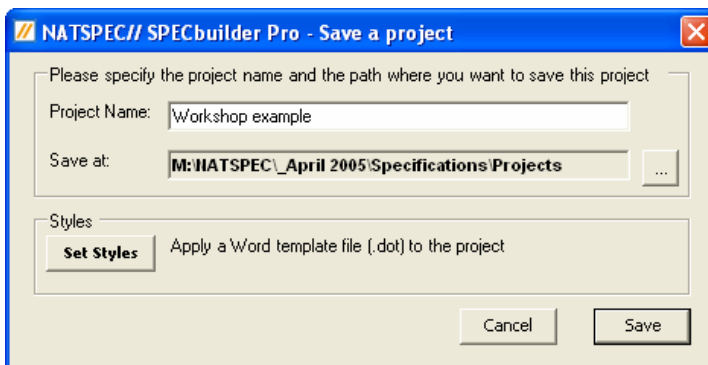


Figure 3 – Save a project

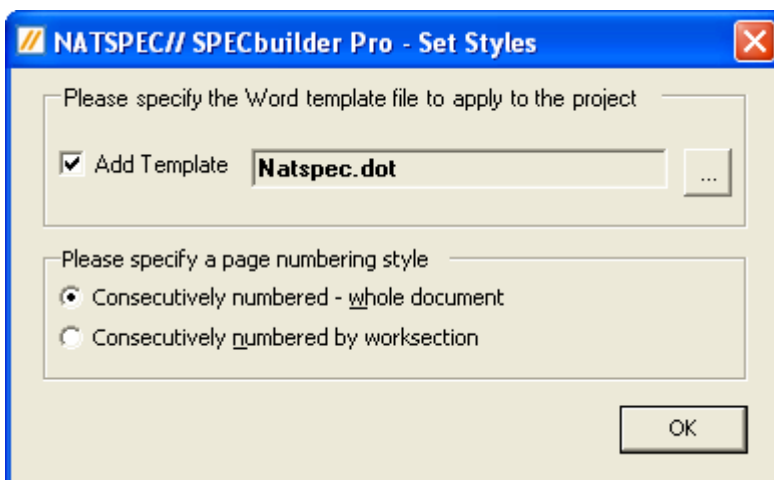


Figure 4 – Set Styles

**SPECBUILDER PRO**

**1.2 Edit/Merge a project**

AS shown in Figure 1 this option is used to edit the project you have created. When you create a new project using *SPECbuilder Pro* it creates Microsoft Word files of the Workgroups rather than a single file of all your selections. There are a couple of reasons for this. The workgroup files are smaller than a single file would be and they are easier to edit and navigate. Also there may be a number of people working on the same specification – so you can have different people working on different workgroups at the same time.

From the **Edit/Merge a project** dialog box you can double click on the workgroup file and it will take straight into Microsoft Word so you can start editing. You can come back to this dialog box as many times as you need to complete the editing of your job. You can also print the files from this dialog box by using the **Print** or **Print All** buttons. The Set Styles button on this dialog is the same as the Set Styles (Figure 4) under Create a new specification.

This dialog also allows you to merge your workgroup files into a single document. You can do the merge whenever you want. For example if you are the only one who is going to be working on the file and you prefer to work in a single file then you may want to merge the workgroup files immediately. Otherwise if it's a large job or a number of people will be working on the job then merge the document after the majority of the editing has been completed.

When you click on the **Merge** button, the **Merging Workgroups** dialog box appears (Figure 6). There are **Up** and **Down** buttons so that you can order the Workgroup files differently if you wish. You are creating a brand new file that is separate from the Workgroup files you've been working on so you need to give the file a new name and also confirm or choose where you want the file saved to.

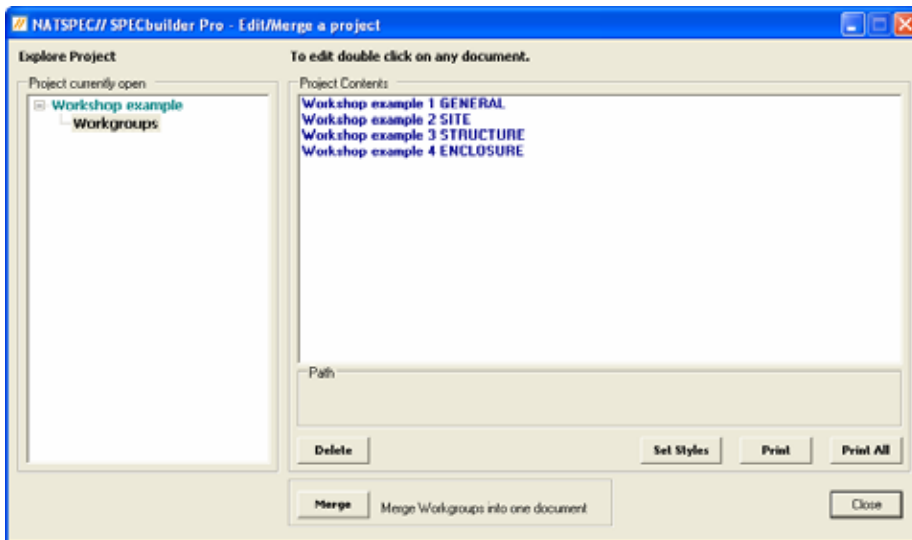


Figure 5 – Edit/Merge a project

## SPECBUILDER PRO

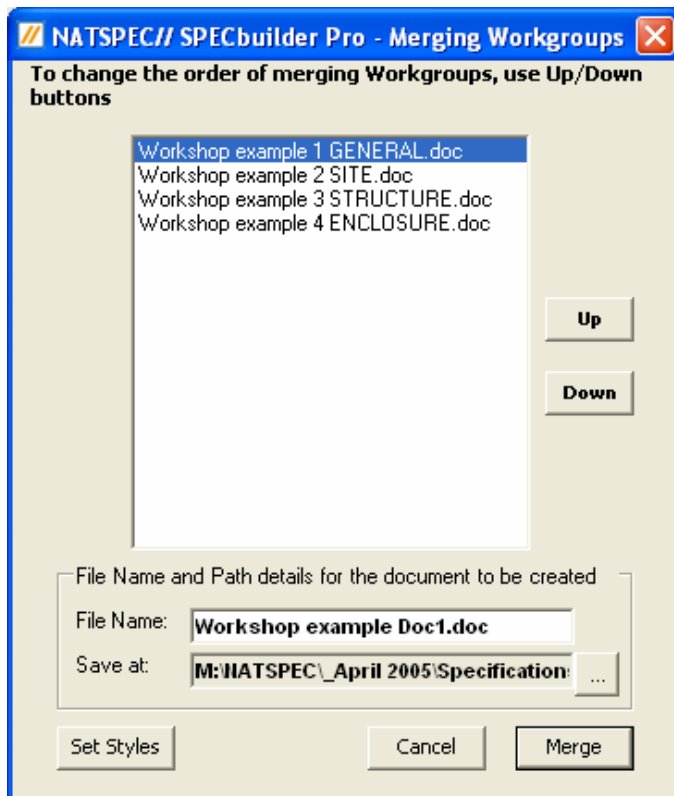


Figure 6 – Merging Workgroups

### 1.3 Add Project

The **Add Project** button on the **Main Menu** allows you to add any existing projects you may have to the *SPECbuilder Pro* system. Just click the button and a standard browse dialog box appears – just browse on your computer (or server) until you find the folders with your project and select them.

### 1.4 Creating Office edited worksections

Office edited worksections are pre-edited worksections for use in specific types of jobs. If your company specializes in hospital work and in certain worksections you always delete certain clauses and add other office prepared text. You can create your own office edited worksection with this work already done and when you use *SPECbuilder Pro* to create a new specification the pre-edited worksection is available for you to choose.

Use *SPECbuilder Pro* to create office edited worksections. From *SPECbuilder Pro's* main page click the **Create/Edit** button under Office edited Worksections. The

**Office edited Worksection** dialog then appears (Figure 7). Choose the worksection you wish to edit and give it a new name (don't forget to read the hint on the **Create Office edited Worksection** dialog box - Figure 8). Once you have renamed the file it will open in Microsoft Word for you to edit. You can come back to this screen whenever you want to create more office edited worksections or to edit ones you have already created.

SPECBUILDER PRO

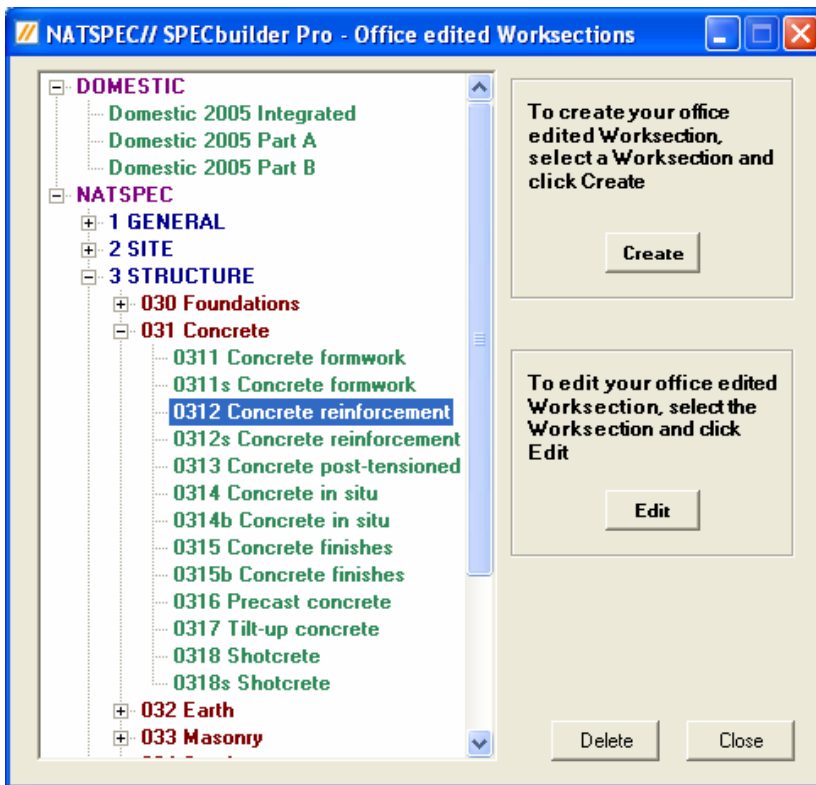


Figure 7 – Office edited Worksections

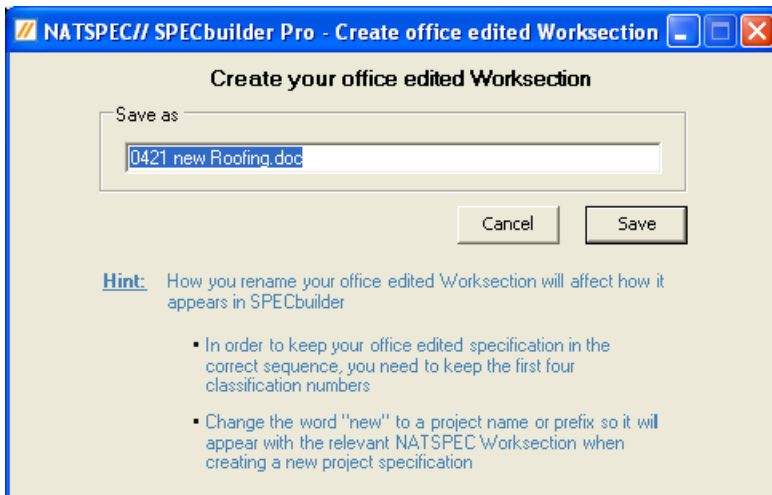


Figure 8 – Create office edited Worksection

The Office edited worksections feature is also good to use if you wish to work in individual worksections for your project rather than Workgroup files. Many specifiers prefer to work in the individual worksection and then create the project file. Just use Office edited worksections, naming the files with the job name or number. Then when you press create the files will be available to choose from.

## MICROSOFT WORD

## 2 MICROSOFT WORD

## 2.1 Manipulating templates and styles

Every Microsoft Word file that is created is based on a Microsoft Template file. All NATSPEC specification files are based on a Microsoft Template file called **NATSPEC.DOT**. The template file contains style information as well as programming information e.g. the **NATSPEC Toolbar** programming information is saved within the **NATSPEC.DOT** file. To check which Template file is attached to your document go to **Tools/Templates and Add-ins** (Figure 9). You can also change the template that your file is attached to from this dialog box. Or you may have done so already through SPECbuilder Pro (Figure 4).

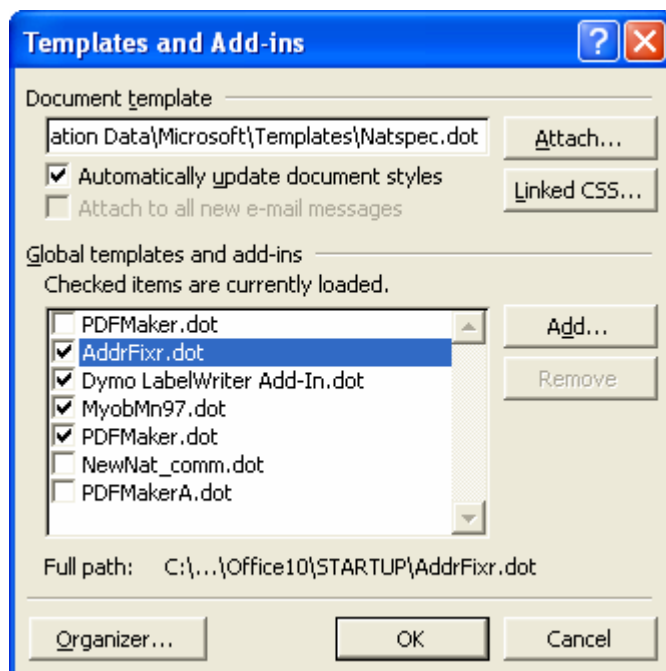


Figure 9 – Templates and Add-ins

Styles are a group of formats saved under a style name e.g. Heading 1 is a style name used in NATSPEC and it is Arial font, 10 point, bolded, 12 point space after, border around. Styles are a really efficient way to format your document. Just place your cursor in a paragraph and choose the style required from the list and the formats are applied.

To edit a style go to **Format/Styles** and a list of styles appears. Choose the style you wish to edit and the **Modify Styles** dialog appears (Figure 10). Click the **Format** button and all the formatting tools that are available to you on the menu and toolbars appear. Make the changes you want. Also make sure you check the **Add to Template** checkbox – this will ensure the changes you make are saved to the Template file that is attached to your file.

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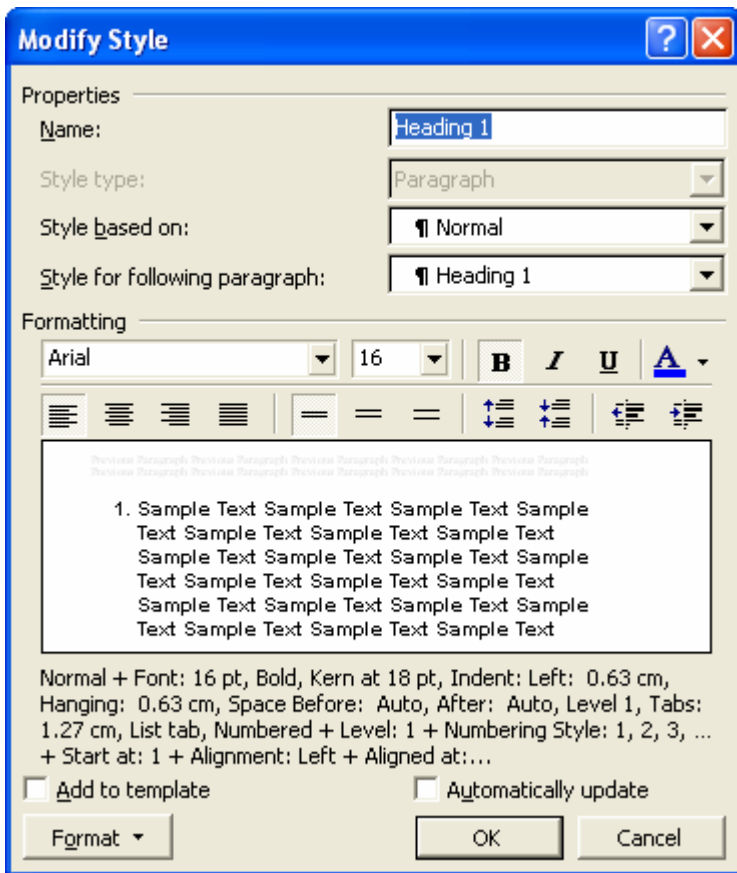


Figure 10 – Modify Style

## 2.2 NATSPEC Toolbar

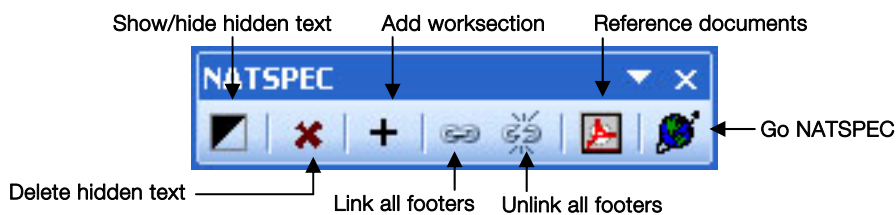


Figure 11 – NATSPEC Toolbar

**Show/Hide hidden text:** Turns hidden (guidance) text ON or OFF.

**Delete hidden text:** Deletes the hidden text (guidance) from the document. Please note that when you have deleted the hidden text it is gone forever but don't worry you are only deleting from the compiled file – not your original NATSPEC files.

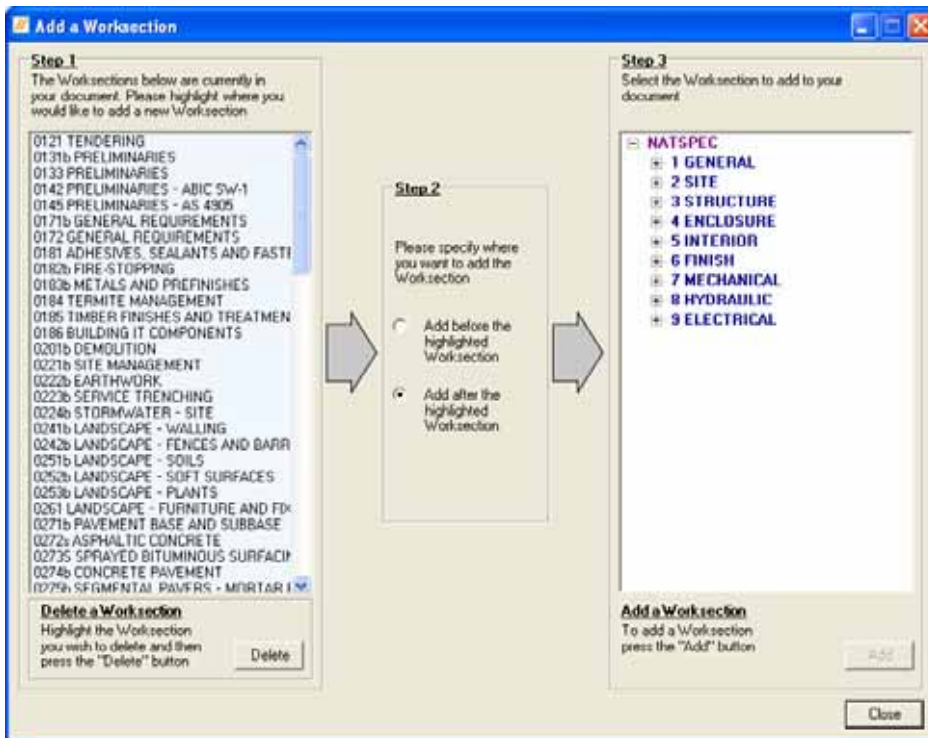
MICROSOFT WORD

**Add worksection:** Allows the user to add a worksection to a compiled file in 3 simple steps. Just press the button and a dialog box appears.

Step 1: This column shows the worksections that already exist in your job. Select a worksection beside the one you want to add.

Step 2: Choose whether you want to add the new worksection above or below the selection.

Step 3: Select the worksection you wish to add.



**Reference documents:** Takes you to the Acrobat documents of NATSPEC Worksections, Commentary, as well as referenced documents such as NATsource and QUICKstart.

**Go NATSPEC:** Opens [www.natspec.com.au](http://www.natspec.com.au)

### 2.3 Section breaks

Section breaks are different from standard Page breaks as follows:

- allow you to have different headers and footers within the same document
- allow you to have different page formats within the same document e.g.
  - . one section of your document has two columns the next does not
  - . different margins between sections of the same document
  - . one section portrait and another section landscape

Section breaks are located under **I nsert/Break**.

- **Next page** inserts a section break and starts the new section on the next page.
- **Continuous** inserts a section break and starts the new section on the same page.
- **Odd page** or **Even page** inserts a section break and starts the new section on the next odd-numbered or even-numbered page.

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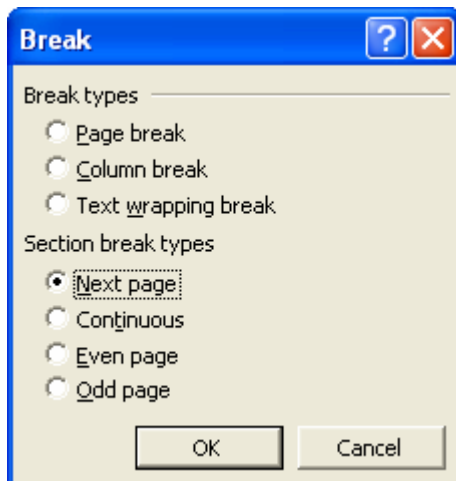


Figure 12 – Break dialog box

### 2.4 Managing headers

Sometimes as you are editing the specification a Section break gets accidentally deleted. When this happens the headers in your document can get a little confused.

Step 1: Reinsert the section break (**Insert/Break/Next page**) (see Figure 12).

Step 2: In the following section go into the header, a **Header and Footer** Toolbar (Figure 13) appears – click the **Link to previous** button. This gets turned on automatically when you insert a section break.

Step 3: Go to the section header that requires changing and edit it back to what it was.

### 2.5 Managing footers

When SPECbuilder creates a single file it creates it with section breaks and different headers and footers for each section. In NATSPEC the different headers are necessary because we identify the worksection with the header but in most cases you will probably want your footers to be the same throughout the document.

Go to the first section of your document and double click in the footer. A **Header and Footer** toolbar appears (see Figure 13). Edit this footer with the information you want to appear in your footer, then press the **Show Next** button on the toolbar. This will take you to the next section's footer. In this footer press the **Link to Previous** button. Continue to do this until you have reached the last section.



Figure 13 – Header and Footer Toolbar

### 2.6 Table of Contents

The Table of Contents (TOC) is generated from the Style headings – another reason for the use of styles. If a heading does not appear in your TOC then make sure it is styled correctly.

The TOC is not automatically updated. This means that if you make any pagination changes the page numbers won't automatically adjust themselves. You will need to

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update the field (right-click over the top of the field and choose **Update Field** or press F9).

Also when generating the TOC or updating the field ensure that the Instruction (hidden) text in the document is either not visible or is deleted. If it is visible it will affect the pagination of the document.

To insert a TOC go to **Insert/Reference/Index and Tables** and choose the **Table of Contents** tab. The **Index and Tables** dialog appears (Figure 14). Choose the options you require and press OK.

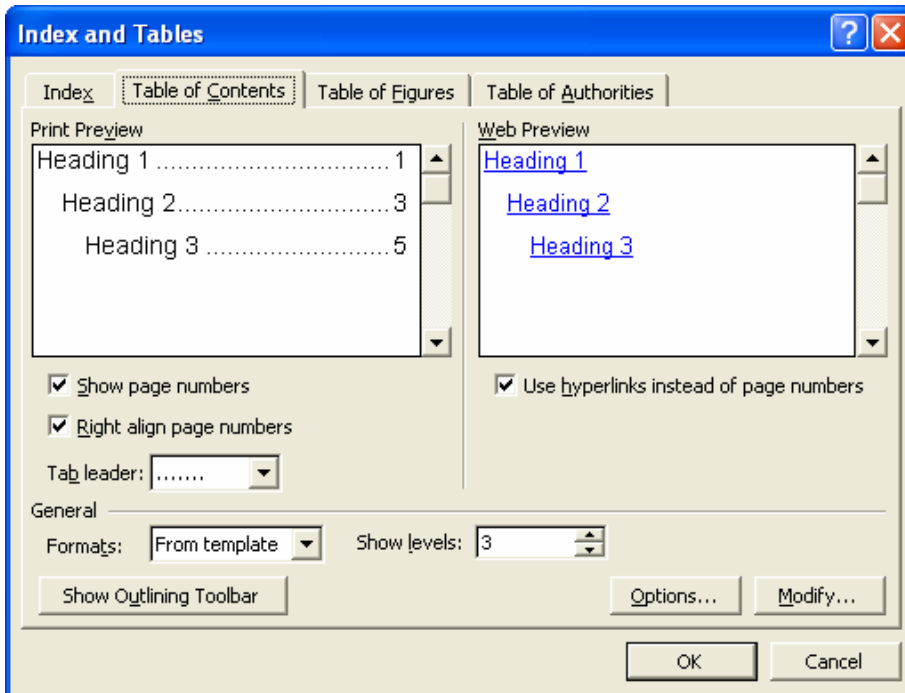


Figure 14 – Index and Tables

## 2.7 Modifying the NATSPEC numbering system

NATSPEC uses 4 levels of headings. These styles are called Heading 1, Heading 2, Heading 3 and Heading 4. The only headings that are numbered in NATSPEC are Heading 2 and 3. Some subscribers like to number Heading 1 (or the worksection). This is best done through Styles. Choose **Format/Styles and formatting**, select any one of the Heading styles and choose **Format/Numbering/Customize** and the following dialog box appears.

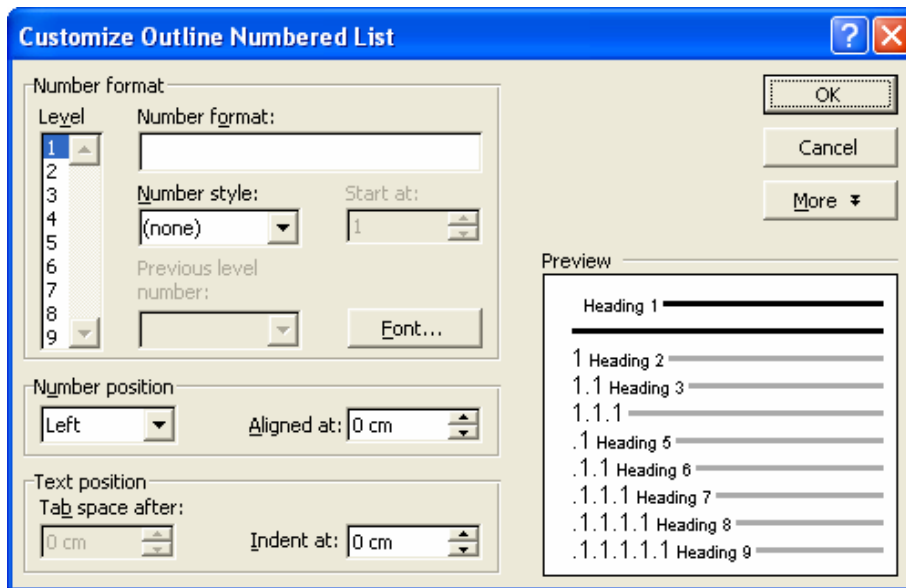


Figure 15 – Customize Outline Numbered List

Step 1: With Level 1 highlighted choose the Number style:, and a shaded 1 will appear in Number format:

Step 2: Select Level 2, clear the Number format box and choose Number style, place your cursor before the shaded 1 and type a full-stop, place your cursor in front of the full stop, drop down the Previous level number and choose Level 1.

Step 3: Select Level 3, clear the Number format box and choose Number style, place your cursor before the shaded 1 and type a full-stop, place your cursor in front of the full stop and drop down the Previous level number and choose Level 2. Place your cursor in front of the Level 2 digit and type a full-stop, place your cursor in front of the full stop and drop down the Previous level number and choose Level 1.

## 2.8 Finding and replacing

This is one of the most overlooked features in Microsoft Word. **Find and replace** is an excellent feature for formatting large documents – especially if you receive files from outside sources and want to make them more consistent with your own.

The **Find and replace** dialog box has a button on the bottom left-hand side called **More** see Figure 16a. When you click on the button the dialog box enlarges and you get more features see Figure 16b.

The beauty of **Find and replace** is that you can find styles or formats and replace them with other styles or formats.

MICROSOFT WORD

For example if someone sends you a file and instead of using Heading 2 they've used a style called Subsection you can search your document for all paragraphs called Subsection and replace it with the Heading 2 style or if there is red text throughout the document you can search on any font that is red and replace it with black. This way the document is consistent as well as making sure all the headings appear in the Table of Contents.

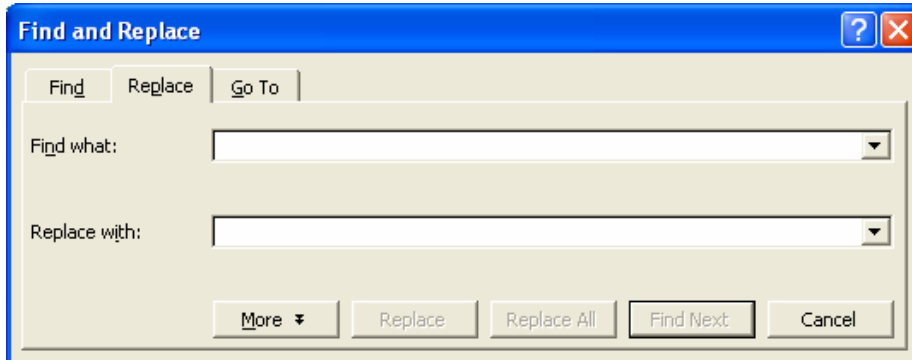


Figure 16a – Find and Replace

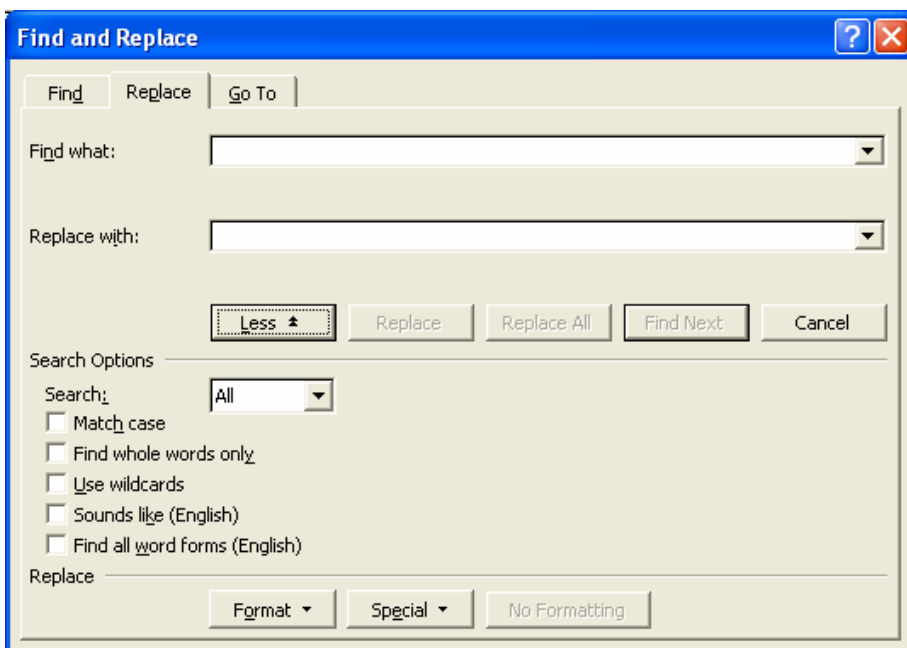


Figure 16b – Find and Replace

## 2.9 Recovering a corrupted file

This works probably 80-90% of the time. Sometimes a file becomes corrupted because your machine crashed while the file was open, or it was sent to you from someone else, etc. If you can at least open the file then give this a go.

Open the file and Select All (**Ctrl A**). Then press the **Shift** key down and press the **left arrow** on your keyboard. This deselects the last paragraph marker of your document. Once you have done this you can Copy (**Ctrl C**) and Paste (**Ctrl V**) the text into a new blank document.

## SPECIFICATIONS

### WHY HAVE A SPECIFICATION?

The primary function of the drawings and specification is to give effect to design decisions. Many design decisions cannot be expressed in graphic form and therefore rely on words for their expression. Other decisions would be too tedious or impractical to be conveyed in graphic form. The drawings and specification compliment each other.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF A SPECIFICATION?

The quality of a building project is dependent on the documentation provided. The contract documentation includes the conditions of contract, the drawings, the schedules and the specification. Whilst the specification is a multi-purpose document, its primary function is to define precisely and succinctly the quality required and the processes necessary for achieving it. Its role includes but extends beyond the selection of materials by providing the baseline for acceptable quality of construction.

### THE ROLES OF THE SPECIFICATION

The specification has many roles including being:

- a written record of design decisions taken.
- a document demonstrating compliance with statutory requirements.
- an estimating document.
- a tendering document.
- a legal (contractual) document.
- an on-site working document.
- a dispute settlement document.
- a project management tool.

### THE FORM OF A SPECIFICATION

NATSPEC specifications worksections are classified, numbered and sequenced in a logical order, which responds to the Australian construction industry. There are recognised methods of specification writing. These include specifying by:

**Reference**, where an identifiable printed and published document is incorporated by reference to it. These may be Australian Standards or manufacturer's technical manuals.

**Performance**, that is by stating a desired end result and the criteria by which the result will be judged for its acceptability.

**Description**, detailing the materials, workmanship and installation procedures to be used.

**Direct**, specification stating a proprietary trade name product.

Each worksection is divided into General, Products, Execution and Selections, where such divisions exist:

**General** includes cross referencing, standards, definitions, submission and inspection requirements, tolerances, samples, testing and the like.

**Products** include materials and components.

**Execution** deals with the fabrication, installation, erection and completion as part of a project.

**Selections** may be made within the text, in schedules within the worksections or provided separately. With simple projects, all selections may be on the drawings.

### CORPORATE INFORMATION

NATSPEC is the trading name of Construction Information Systems Limited, ABN 20 117 574 606.

NATSPEC, founded in 1975, is a not-for-profit organisation that is owned by the design, build, construct and property industry through professional associations and government property groups. It is impartial and is not involved in advocacy or policy development. NATSPEC's major service is the comprehensive national specification system endorsed by government and professional bodies. The specification is for all building structures with specialist packages for architects, interior designers, landscape architects, structural engineers, service engineers and domestic owners.

NATSPEC's aims are to provide economies of scale for its stakeholders and to improve the quality of construction in Australia via the provision of information, tools, products and services.

### NATSPEC STAKEHOLDERS

- Air Conditioning and Mechanical Contractors' Association of Australia
- Association of Consulting Engineers Australia
- Australian Council of Built Environment Design Professions
- Australian Elevator Association
- Australian Institute of Building
- Australian Institute of Building Surveyors
- Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors
- Building Commission Victoria
- Construction Industry Engineering Services Group
- Dept for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure (SA)
- Dept of Finance and Administration
- Dept of Housing and Works (WA)
- Dept of Planning and Infrastructure (NT)
- Dept of Public Works (QLD)
- Dept of Treasury (ACT)
- Dept of Treasury and Finance (TAS)
- Engineers Australia
- Master Builders Australia
- NSW Department of Commerce
- Royal Australian Institute of Architects
- Standards Australia

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- // Department of Finance and Administration
- // Department of Housing and Works (WA)
- // Department of Planning and Infrastructure (NT)
- // Department of Public Works (QLD)
- // Department of Treasury (ACT)
- // Department of Treasury and Finance (TAS)
- // Engineers Australia
- // Master Builders Australia
- // NSW Department of Commerce
- // Royal Australian Institute of Architects
- // Standards Australia

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