

VOLUNTARY ENVIRONMENTAL RATING SCHEMES FOR BUILDINGS

INTRODUCTION

In addition to the energy efficiency provisions of the BCA, there are a number of national mandatory and voluntary environmental rating schemes in place in Australia.

National Australian Built Environment Rating System (NABERS) measures an existing building's overall environmental performance during operation. In May 2008, the Australian Building Greenhouse Rating (ABGR) was renamed NABERS Energy. It can be used by building owners, facility managers or tenants to rate greenhouse and energy performance of new and existing buildings. A rating of one-to-six stars is determined, based on 12 months of a building's actual energy consumption. Do-it-yourself calculators are available on-line at www.nabers.com.au. This scheme is administered nationally by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage. NABERS provides on-line calculators for rating different building types on a 5-6 star scale:

- *Office* rates the energy and water consumption, waste generation and indoor environment of the base office building, office tenancies, or both combined.
- *Home* rates the energy and water use of homes. It applies to any home where the house and land carries all of its own services as a single identifiable package. This includes detached houses, terraces and townhouses, but not apartments or units where individual occupancies are located above or below each other within the same building.
- *Hotels* rates the energy and water consumption of AAA-rated business hotels.
- *Retail* rates the energy and water consumption of the common areas of shopping centres. It does not include tenancy energy use for light and power.

NABERS is also developing calculators for assessing the environmental performance of schools, hospitals and transport.

MANDATORY DISCLOSURE

Commercial Building Disclosure (CBD) is a national program managed by the Australian Government Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency designed to improve the energy efficiency of Australia's large office buildings.

Under the program, since 1 November 2010 most sellers or lessors of office space of 2,000 m² or more have been required to obtain and disclose an up-to-date energy efficiency rating. Certain exceptions and exemptions apply.

There is a transition period until 1 November 2011 during which a valid NABERS Energy base or whole building rating can be disclosed. From 1 November 2011 a full Building Energy Efficiency Certificate (BEEC) will need to be disclosed. BEECs are valid for 12 months, must be publicly accessible on the online Building Energy Efficiency Register, and include:

- a NABERS Energy star rating for the building
- an assessment of tenancy lighting in the area of the building that is being sold or leased and
- general energy efficiency guidance

The NABERS Energy rating must also be included in any advertisement for the sale, lease or sublease of the office space.

VOLUNTARY RATING SCHEMES

Green Star is promoted as a comprehensive rating system for evaluating the environmental design and performance of buildings based on a number of criteria, including management, indoor environmental quality, energy, transport, water, materials, land use and ecology, and emissions. It is administered by the Green Building Council of Australia – a national not-for-profit, non-government organisation. Current Green Star Tools include *Office Design*, *Office As Built*, *Office Interiors*, *Office*, *Education*, *Retail Centre*, *Multi Unit Residential*, *Healthcare*, *Industrial and Custom*. Green Star pilot rating tools include *Public Building PILOT* and *Convention Centre PILOT*. Green Star rating tools under development include *Performance* and *Communities*. The status and details of each tool can be checked at www.gbca.org.au

NATSPEC PROVISIONS

Most NATSPEC worksections incorporate specific energy efficiency measures in relation to the ratings requirements. The TECHreport on *Specifying ESD* also covers these rating schemes and the topics covered in various worksections to obtain a rating.

Rating Schemes



National Australian Built Environment Rating System.



Green Star rating systems.

Relevant websites

National Australian Built Environment Rating System (NABERS)
www.nabers.com.au

Commercial Building Disclosure
www.cbd.gov.au

Green Star
www.gbca.org.au/

Energy Efficiency in Government Operations (EEGO) Policy
www.environment.gov.au

Related documents

BCA

Relevant worksections

- 0168 *Green star – as built submissions*
- 0169 *Green star – office as built submissions*
- 042 *Roofing worksections*
- 043 *Cladding worksections*
- 0451 *Windows and glazed doors*
- 0461 *Glazing*
- 0471 *Insulation and sarking membranes*
- 07 *Mechanical worksections*
- 08 *Hydraulic worksections*
- 09 *Electrical worksections*