

11 January 2021

**Design and Building Practitioners Regulation 2020**

**Policy and Strategy, Better Regulation Division**

**Department of Customer Service**

**Locked Bag 2906**

**LISAROW NSW 2252**

**By email: [BCR@customerservice.nsw.gov.au](mailto:BCR@customerservice.nsw.gov.au)**

*Design Matters National submission to the draft Design and Building Practitioners Regulation 2020.*

Dear Better Regulation Division,

I write to you on behalf of Design Matters National in regard to the draft Design and Building Practitioners Regulation 2020 that includes registration schemes for design and building practitioners and engineers who work on multistorey, multi-unit residential apartment buildings. Our submission on the proposed registration schemes is specifically in relation to Schedule 3 of the draft Regulation – Continuing professional development. Our submission highlights the benefit of industry involvement, most notably through using the expertise and experience available to develop and deliver appropriate educational resources. This submission presents Design Matters National's views that:

- Support the introduction of the registration scheme to improve quality and compliance in the building production process by ensuring core work is done by skilled and experienced people
- Recommend inclusion and consideration be given to the principle of mutual recognition of registration systems between jurisdictions
- Offer support and involvement in the building and delivery of educational resources through the Regulation's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements.

As you may be aware, Design Matters National are Australia's leading industry organisation which represents building design professionals. We work closely with federal, state and local government to ensure the quality of building design is maintained at the highest professional and ethical standards. Formerly the Building Designers Association of Victoria (BDAV), Design Matters National is accepted among government agencies, universities/TAFES and industry groups as a thought leader on building design issues. We have over 2000 members nationally and 79 members in NSW across the built environment, who we support through networking, education, mentoring and government advocacy programs.

Design Matters National welcomes the NSW Government's *Design and Building Practitioners Act 2020*, as a positive and necessary step forward in the important reforms of NSW's building and construction sector. We are broadly supportive of the proposed registration schemes as we view registration as a key means to regulate the industry and protect those practitioners who already operate ethically. We note the need of a mutual recognition process for existing registration systems in other jurisdictions, which will affect our members that work in multiple states. We would encourage cooperation and collaboration to achieve close alignment across jurisdictions, as recommended by the Australian Building Codes Board's (ABCB) discussion paper on a draft National Registration Framework (NRF) for Building Practitioners.

Design Matters National is supportive of the need for Continuing Professional Development requirements for building practitioners, as it contributes to maintaining a higher standard of education across the industry for registered practitioners. We acknowledge that the CPD Guidelines will include approved education and training from the Construct NSW Learning Management System and the NCC CPD programs developed by the ABCB, and this will be done in partnership with TAFE NSW. We would welcome the opportunity to be involved in the development and delivery of the courses and resources required for this CPD system.

We have been heavily involved in the registration of building designers in Victoria for 25 years through the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) and this experience and expertise positions us strongly in our ability to help in the development of and long term involvement in NSW's registration system. We conduct pre-registration workshops, mentoring assistance and relevant CPD, and VBA refers applicants to attend our pre-registration workshops to properly prepare building designers for successful registration. The Victorian registration system is longstanding and successful, and much could be adopted in the development of the NSW registration system.

We are supportive of this reform activity and believe that the registration of building designers should include involvement of industry and those affected. We believe we have much to offer in the development and running of the NSW registration system, and our assistance in providing the educational resources tailored for this process would be invaluable.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue with you and we will follow up with your office upon this request.

Yours sincerely,

**Peta Anderson**  
Chief Executive Office