



Newsletter

8th June 2018

INDUSTRY NEWS

The SIA is forever “punching above its weight” and if ever there was a tangible example of that claim now is the time

STANDARDS



We have a number of Members actively engaged with Standards Australia in the review of Australian Standard AS4285 – SKYLIGHTS. The publication of this standard way back in 1995 was one of the very first ‘milestones’ of the SIA, and we

were again involved in the last review in 2007.

The Draft Sub Committee has wide industry representation all working to ensure that the review this year holds the standard in good stead for the next number of years and ensures that Consumers, when purchasing a Skylight designed and tested in accordance with AS4285 have the comfort of knowing that best industry practice has been incorporated into their product. The draft review is expected to be opened for public comment around October / November 2018.

It is important to note that one of the conditions for acceptance into Membership of the SIA involves the manufacture and/or sale of AS4285 tested product.



REGULATION

Recently the Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) sought public comment with respect to the National Construction Code (NCC) requirements for thermal performance of building envelope products, and of course the SIA interest centred around SKYLIGHTS.

The SIA is working hard to see an improvement in thermal performance of all skylight products and has overseen the introduction of WERSfS (Window Energy Rating Scheme for Skylights), which is finally getting momentum & inline with the NCC thermal goal and the reality of increased stringency is understood and accepted by our industry. However, the view of the SIA is that the NCC is perhaps too driven on Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (SHGC) alone and looking to specify figures that are not achievable at this time.

The SIA submission to the ABCB, whilst it represents a hurdle to the industry it is one the SIA have agreed to work towards. The SIA has striven for a balance between stringency and performance.

We believe that an aggressive pursuit of SHCG can seriously reduce the visible transmittance of skylights (their primary purpose) and could encourage design to code mentality at the cost of good design and correct use of product that is fit for purpose. This potential sacrifice in Lumens to meet the NCC is not desirable and any moderate increase in U value & SHGC to the Public Comment Proposal will be easily justified on health, aesthetics & energy use savings.

The lack of acknowledgement by the NCC of the well documented benefits of daylighting and skylights is a significant omission and any requirement based purely on SHGC and U value, fails to recognise the primary purpose of skylights - to allow the user to switch off electrical energy usage during daylight hours. This benefit is easily measured and quantifiable. There are many other benefits including the amenity of internal spaces and the fact that daylight is essential for human psychological sense of well-being i.e. 'for places where human happiness matters' (Hersch Ong).

Without recognition of the role that these sustainable energy products perform the

SIA believes the fundamental starting point is missing. It's a case of throwing the baby out with the bathwater. The ability to provide both ventilation & light thereby saving energy, in addition to the psychological benefits have constantly been overlooked & not credited by the NCC.

Skylights can also increase the amenity of internal spaces that might otherwise require supplementary artificial lighting or ventilation, such as windowless rooms. They allow additional flexibility in architectural design and can admit more than three times as much light as a vertical window of the same size.

TRAINING

For more than two decades the SIA has been pursuing the regulatory bodies in charge of the licencing of qualified tradesmen, and in particular in Victoria, with what was previously known as the Plumbing Industry Commission – now overseen by the Victorian Building Authority (VBA)



In the early days the SIA sought to have skylight installers be issued with RESTRICTED roof plumbing licences, in exactly the same way in which the installers of solid fuel heaters were issued with restricted licences.

The SIA saw this as a significant step to protect consumers, and at the same time train new people entering the skylight industry. It is well known that by and large roofing contractors would prefer to lay roof and all of the related roofing systems, gutters, capping and the like, and are not too fussed about roof penetrations for skylights, let alone the skylight 'under roof' components like light shafts, ceiling trims and diffusers. The SIA got very close to that goal way back in 1999, but a change of government saw the whole subject stagnate.

We have once again managed to get some support in moving this forward again thanks to the Victorian Government, Skills Commissioners Office, who have asked Holmesglen TAFE College to set up a steering committee to see where the subject of skylight installer training and perhaps then licencing can be taken. At this point it is a Victorian based project, but the obvious hope would be that if we get it up and running than it should follow nationally.

There is a dearth of available and qualified skylight installers nationwide, and training and licencing is the only way to turn this around. It is the best way to give

consumers confidence of anyone making a roof penetration is qualified to undertake the tasks involved

SIA - DESIGN AWARDS 2018



The applications for the most prestigious SIA Design Awards are open, closing on the 30th of June 2018. The applications will be judged by a panel of industry notables, and presented at the 2018 Fenestration 2018 Conference, in Port Douglas on Friday the 21st of September. This is a truly glittering occasion and SIA Members Nominations are recognised in a “Oscars” style presentation in front of Conference Delegate and their partners. Certainly the ideal way for a SIA Member to get “their name in lights”

JOIN THE SKYLIGHT INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION



Question: Are you Involved in The Skylight Industry in any way shape or form YES/NO ??

If NO, we hope you enjoy the Newsletter and we also hope it provokes some thought and ideally questions.

If YES, then why not join the SIA and join the daylighting voice of Australia? Contact us via www.siai.com.au, or directly to our General Secretary, Laurie Baker, email at admin@siai.com.au or mobile on 0413 610 100