

The DMN Roundup

DESIGN MATTERS
NATIONAL
07 August 2025



ESSENTIAL UPDATES

This issue tracks a series of significant regulatory and construction sector developments, including the latest amendment to the National Construction Code, growing support for modular housing solutions, smart infrastructure and urban planning reforms, and renewed attention on industrial relations and national standards access.

We also highlight the changing face of residential design, preview key policy inquiries, and share an exciting media milestone for the True Zero Carbon Challenge. Our events calendar features several linked CPD sessions to help members stay ahead of these trends and compliance shifts.

Governance Reminder: DMN Constitution Available

As a member-driven organisation, Design Matters National operates under a comprehensive constitution that outlines our governance structure, member rights, and organisational procedures.

Access the DMN Constitution

Our constitution covers:

- Membership categories and rights
- Board structure and responsibilities
- Meeting procedures and voting rights
- Financial management and reporting
- Amendment processes

Understanding our governance framework helps members engage effectively with DMN and participate in our democratic processes. All members are encouraged to familiarise themselves with these important documents.

PLANNING & POLICY WATCH

Push to rethink "tick-box" apartment design standards

Award-winning developer Neometro is calling for the Victorian Government to reconsider its rigid approach to apartment standards, arguing that current regulations risk stifling innovation in high-density housing. Directors say a more flexible design-led framework would empower architects and building designers to respond to the housing crisis with creative solutions.

Read more in [The Age](#). For professionals navigating compliance within evolving frameworks, our [Building Practitioner Pre-Registration Course \(17 September\)](#) is essential.

National productivity inquiry seeks feedback

The [Queensland Productivity Commission](#) has released its [Interim Report on the construction sector](#), calling for stakeholder feedback by 28 August 2025. The report outlines recommendations to improve sector productivity and invites input via its [submission portal](#).

For designers navigating shifting policy and planning frameworks, we recommend exploring our [Ask a Planner webinar series](#).

Affordable housing via tram corridors?

New research suggests Australia could address homelessness and land use inefficiencies by shifting to higher-density housing around public transport corridors. European and Asian cities show how well-designed density, coupled with net zero goals, can reshape affordability.

Read more in [The Fifth Estate](#).





Helping Builders Stay Covered

Introducing Our New Contract Works Facility

We're excited to launch our Contract Works Insurance facility in collaboration with Mecon Insurance, a leading specialist in construction insurance.

If your clients are builders working under a HIA or Master Builders contract, you likely know they need more than just Public Liability or Building Indemnity. One policy that often flies under the radar? Contract Works Insurance.

Our new facility is designed to help you:

Comply with contractual insurance requirements

Safeguard materials, work-in-progress, and site-related risks including fire, storm damage, and theft

Simplify your insurance process with expert support from a team that understands the construction industry

Incorporates Public Liability cover

This is a comprehensive annual policy that can cover multiple builds throughout the year, to ensure all your projects are protected.

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for more information, answers to common questions, coverage details and guidance tailored for Builders:

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STANDARDS & REGULATORY LANDSCAPE

NCC 2022 Amendment 2 now in effect

To align with changes to the Premises Standards, the ABCB has published NCC 2022 Amendment 2. This update integrates the 2021 version of AS 1428.1 and applies to designers of public buildings, taking effect from 29 July 2025.

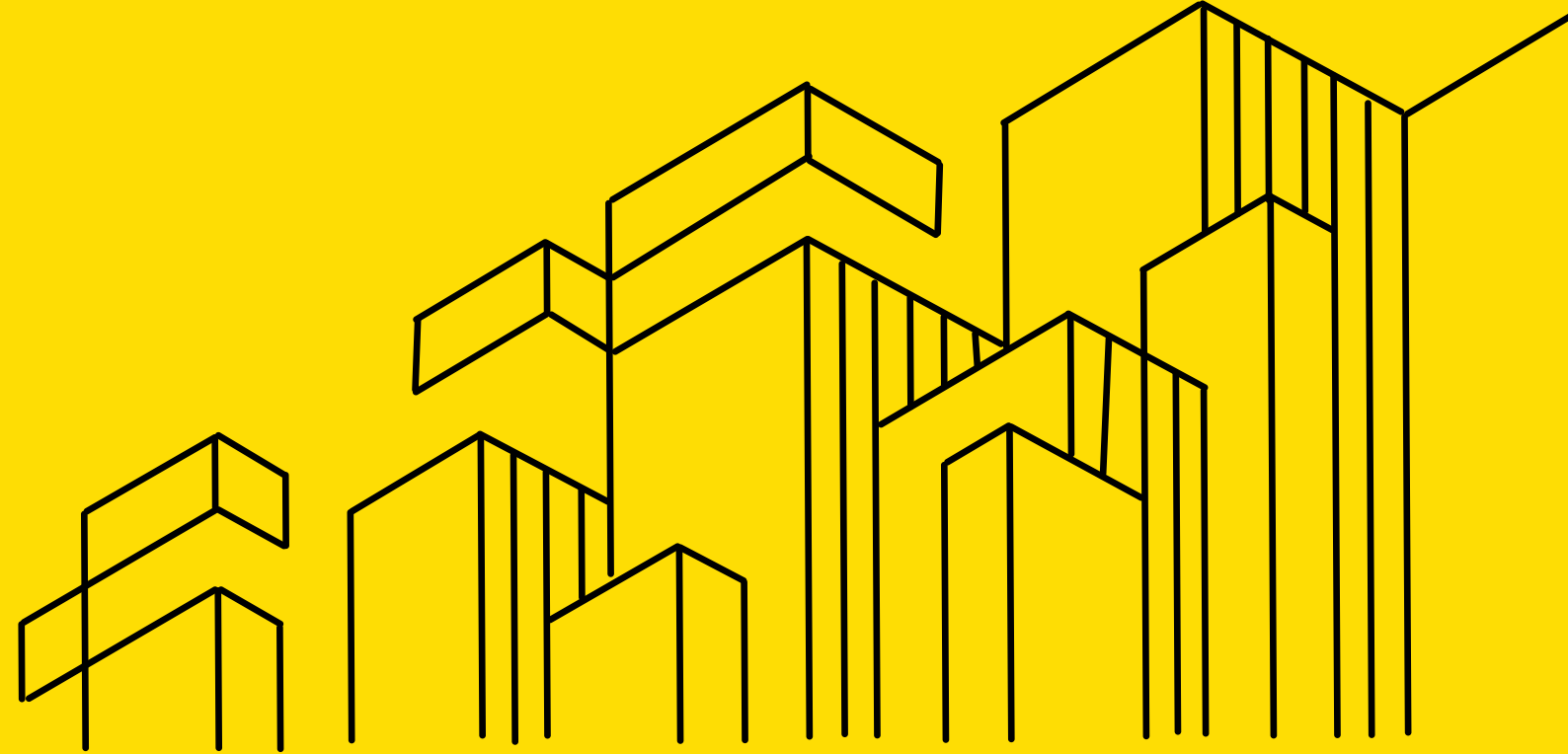
Designers working on public projects should familiarise themselves with the new accessibility requirements. A refresher on design obligations is available via the [DMN Shop](#). Read more from [ABCB](#).

Free access to Australian Standards back on the agenda

A roundtable between Standards Australia and construction leaders has reignited the push for free public access to Australian Standards. This conversation follows sustained concerns about accessibility and cost barriers.

Meanwhile, a new draft [Building Commissioning Standard \(AS 5342\)](#) is open for public comment.

Read more from [Sourceable](#) and [HVAC&R News](#).



CONSTRUCTION & INNOVATION

Growing spotlight on modular housing: bank-backed factories and speed-to-market

In a show of confidence for prefabrication, Commonwealth Bank has funded a new 21,900m² factory for Oly Homes on the Sunshine Coast, aiming to triple the builder's modular home output. Melbourne-based Grove is also entering the residential space, promising homes in just 20 days. Both companies are positioning modular construction as key to resolving Australia's chronic housing undersupply.

These developments reinforce the growing role of modular solutions in easing housing shortages. DMN's [Modern Methods of Construction Series \(2 September\)](#) offers practical insights into prefabrication and regulatory pathways.

Read more in [AFR](#), [AFR – Brenton Grove](#), and [Architecture & Design](#).

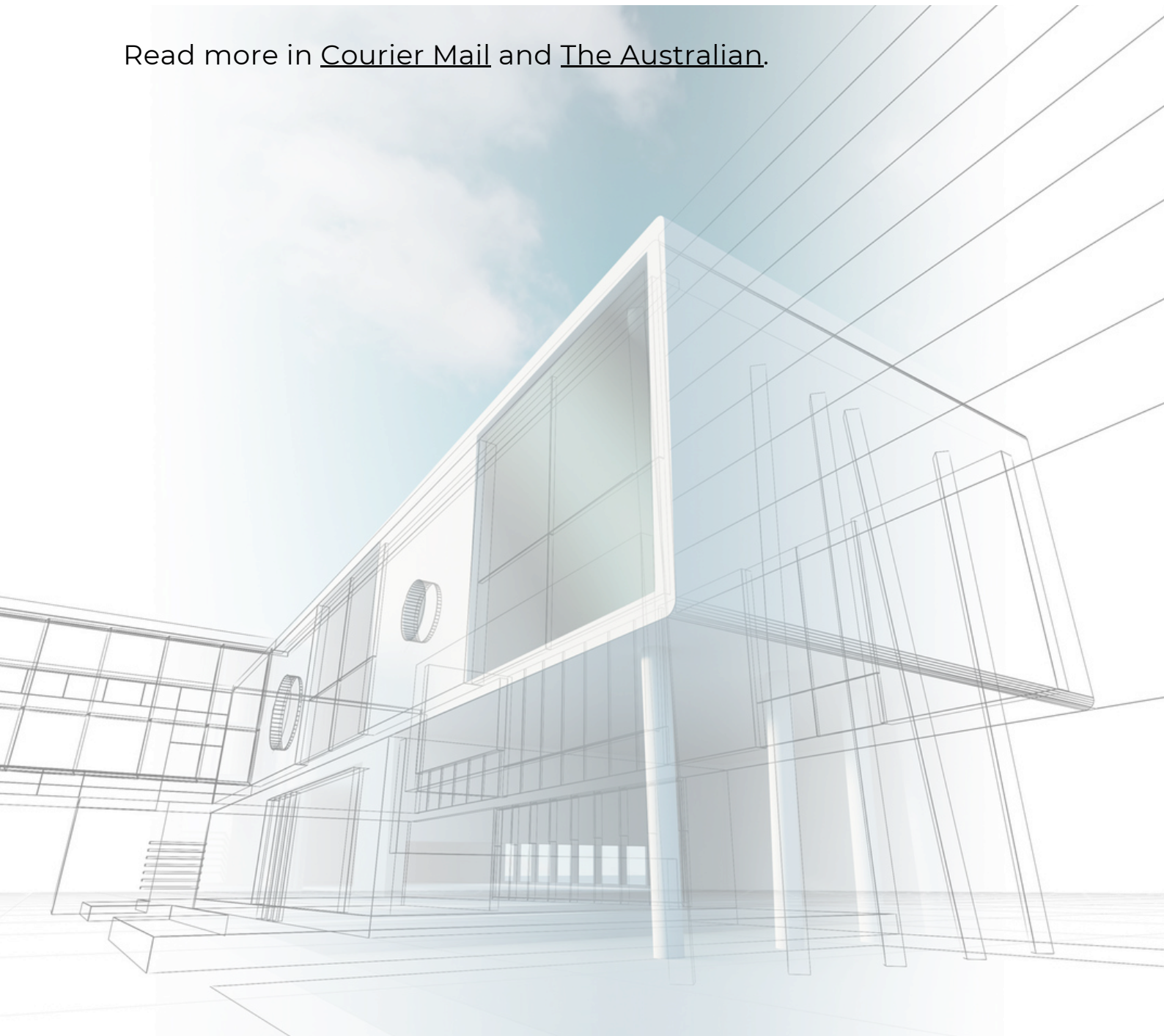
Smart cities, slower reform: Brisbane's emerging edge

Brisbane is now Australia's fastest-growing capital city, with urban planners urging smarter, tech-enabled infrastructure to support growth. The city's trajectory was a key topic at the Sustainable Smart Cities Conference.

This complements Urbis' recent findings that Australian developments lag behind global best practice in smart infrastructure adoption.

For insights into designing for the future, join our [Upskill for Whole of Home Masterclass \(19 August\)](#).

Read more in [Courier Mail](#) and [The Australian](#).



Beautifully sustainable



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INDUSTRY & WORKPLACE REFORM

Proposed IR reforms raise alarm for small business

New workplace reforms introduced in the [Fair Work Amendment \(Protecting Penalty and Overtime Rates\) Bill 2025](#) have been labelled counterproductive by the [Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#) and [Shadow Minister Tim Wilson](#). The bill restricts employee/employer flexibility on penalty rates and has sparked concern over unintended consequences for small businesses.

For sole traders and practice owners trying to navigate cost pressures, our [Fee Setting for Building Designers: Real Talk from the Business Frontline \(13 August\)](#) is a must-attend.

DESIGN TRENDS

Concrete reimagined: from brutalism to warmth

A new feature from [Allhomes](#) explores the evolving role of concrete in residential design. Once associated with institutional forms, concrete is now being embraced for its sculptural softness and thermal benefits.

This tonal shift aligns with principles of biophilic and passive design discussed in our [sustainability webinars](#).

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

Green Magazine has featured the [True Zero Carbon Challenge 2026](#) in their latest e-news and online coverage. With over 12 teams signed up in the first week, momentum for the Challenge is strong. Learn more or register for the [Info Session \(8 August\)](#).

Meanwhile, the TZCC continues to gain traction from respect publications like Green Magazine to well known industry names who are lining up to partner with this unique national initiative.

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Design Matters National Launches 2026 True Zero Carbon Challenge at Open House Melbourne



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Building
Design
Awards
2025
East Coast

MELBOURNE
25 OCT

Our annual DMN community celebrations are fast approaching. With judging nearly complete, now is the time to grab the last of the few remaining tickets!

Melbourne event: **NEARLY SOLD OUT**—we await confirmation from the venue if more seating can be accommodated due to unprecedented interest. *Group discounts are available for table bookings.*

Perth event: Few tickets remain—book now to avoid missing out.



Building
Design
Awards
2025
West Coast

PERTH
10 OCT

AWARDED NOW AVAILABLE

Awarded magazine is now on sale via [Magshop](#). This limited-edition publication celebrates the best in Australian building design from last year's awards.



maximising YOUR DMN MEMBERSHIP VALUE

Your membership delivers
more than you may know

Design Matters National provides
comprehensive support for building
design professionals across multiple
areas of practice and wellbeing.



Professional Resources & Support

NEW: Mental Health Resources

We have uploaded new mental health and wellbeing resources to provide essential support for managing the pressures of professional practice. These include:

[7 Days of Self Care](#)

[Work/Life Balance](#)

[Mindfulness](#)

[Understanding Anxiety](#)

[Understanding Depression](#)

[Psychological Safety at Work](#)

[Managing Mental Health](#)

[Setting Meaningful Goals](#)

You can find these new resources under the [Resources tab](#) when you log in.

Community Connection

Private Members Facebook Group

Join over 1,000+ building design professionals in our exclusive member community. Share project opportunities, seek collaborations, get technical advice, and network with peers across Australia.

Join Our Private Facebook Group

Perfect for:

- Project referrals and collaborations
- Technical problem-solving
- Industry networking
- Job opportunities and announcements
- Professional development discussions



Technical Support & Training

TechLink for Energy Efficiency Assessors

Many EEAs don't know about this valuable and FREE resource especially for DMN accredited EEAs!

Access technical support, software guidance, troubleshooting assistance, and peer consultation for complex thermal performance assessments.

Submit your question to [DMN TechLink here](#), or email TPASupport@designmatters.org.au

Free Member Webinars & CPD Library

All DMN members enjoy complimentary access to select webinar content throughout the year. Regular technical updates, industry briefings, and professional development sessions at no additional cost. You can also access our extensive library of paid webinars, technical guides, practice notes and industry updates.

[Access all our webinars here.](#)

[Access all our member resources here.](#)

Career & Business Hub

Looking for work? Have projects to share?

Design Matters National provides multiple platforms to connect our professional community:

DMN Job Board - Post positions, search opportunities, and connect with employers

Private Members Facebook Group - Share project opportunities, seek collaborations, and network with peers

Whether you're seeking employment, have vacancies to fill, or need to refer projects to other members, our platforms ensure you're connected with the right professionals.

For Employers

Post detailed job descriptions, experience requirements, and contact information

For Job Seekers

Create comprehensive profiles showcasing your skills and experience

For Project Referrals

Connect with members who can take on work you can't accommodate

Join our thriving professional network and strengthen our industry connections.

AS 4000:2025 Updates

Free Industry Webinar

Standards Australia has released the updated AS 4000:2025 General Conditions of Contract, reflecting key legislative and industry changes. These updates aim to improve contract clarity, risk allocation, dispute resolution, and work health and safety responsibilities.

To support industry understanding, they're hosting a **free webinar** titled "**Understanding the updates to AS 4000:2025**" on **Tuesday 12 August at 1:00PM-2:00PM AEST**.

This session will walk through key changes and provide practical insights for construction professionals, contract managers, and legal advisors.

[Register for the AS 4000:2025 webinar here](#)

This webinar is essential for building designers working with construction contracts and seeking to understand how the updated standard affects project delivery and risk management.

Upcoming Events & CPD

AUGUST

True Zero Carbon Challenge 2026: What's it all about?

Date: 08 AUG

Time: 12:00PM (AEST)

Location: ONLINE

Presenters: Jeremy Spencer

Fee setting for building designers: real talk from the business frontline

Date: 13 AUG

Time: 2:00-3:00 pm (AEST)

Location: ONLINE

Presenters: Peter Lombo and Jason Holmes

Upskill for Whole of Home Masterclass

Date: 19 AUG

Time: 1:00PM (AEST)

Location: Online

Presenter: David Canciello | Davita Consulting

How to affordably upgrade the sustainability of existing buildings

Date: 20 AUG

Time: 1:00PM (AEST)

Location: Online

Presenter: Tim Adams | F2 Design

Ask an Interior Designer: Designing from the inside out - The power of early interior planning

Date: 21 August

Time: 6:30PM

Location: ONLINE

AUGUST

Tour: 38 Albermarle Street — Build to Rent to Own, Reimagined

Date: 26 August

Time: 10:00-11:00AM

Location: 38 Albermarle St, Kensington

Presenter: Briony Massie | Associate Director, Fieldwork

Brisbane lunch and learn. Bricks, cladding and climate: new frontiers in material specification

Date: 26 August

Time: 12:00-2:00PM

Location: 27 James St, Fortitude Valley QLD 4006

Presenter: Eve Castle | Head of Business Development | Brickworks

DMN Member Dinner- Northside at Saigon Secret

Date: 28 August

Time: 6:30PM

Location: Saigon Secret

SEPTEMBER

Modern Methods of Construction Series. Building smarter: prefabrication and the future of construction

Date: 2 Sep

Time: 1:00PM

Location: ONLINE

Presenter: Damien Crough | Executive Chair | prefabAUS

DMN Member Dinner - Hobart

Date: 3 Sep

Time: 5:00PM

Location: 140 Cascade Rd, South Hobart

Tassie Member Breakfast - Hobart

Date: 4 Sep

Time: 8:00AM

Location: Brickworks Hobart Design Studio

Presenter: Wayne Gorman

DMN Member Dinner - Launceston

Date: Sep 4

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: 140 Cascade Rd, Hobart

Tassie Member Breakfast - Launceston

Date: 5 Sep

Time: 8:00 AM

Location: Design Centre 81 Brisbane St, Launceston

Presenter: Wayne Gorman

Members of DMN Southside Catch Up

Date: 12 Sep

Time: 12:30PM

Location: St Martin's Cafe
116 Martin St, BrightonVIC

Smarter building and heritage design in the digital age

Date: Sep 16

Time: 4:30-6:30 PM

Location: The Innovation Space, Building E, Level 1, Bendigo TAFE

162 Hargreaves St, Bendigo VIC 3550

Presenters: Peter Sullivan, Janita Norman, Don Abbey, James Tyrrell

Building Practitioner Pre-Registration Course for VBA

Date: Sep 17

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: Online (AEST)

Presenter: Geoff Hoare

Upskill Now Masterclass (Thermal)

Date: Sep 23

Time: 12:00 PM

Location: Online (AEST)

Presenter: David Canciello

Contract Administration Workshop

Date: Sep 27

Time: 8:30 AM

Location: Online (AEST)

Presenter: Geoff Hoare

OCTOBER

True Zero Carbon Challenge 2026

Anatomy of a Winning Entry: Bricolage House

Date: OCT 16

Time: 3:00 PM

Location: ONLINE (AEST)

Presenter: Jeremy Spencer + Uta Green

A roof over your head: roof space ventilation and condensation management

Date: OCT 21

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: ONLINE (AEDT)

Presenter: Andy Russell | Proctor Group

Melbourne Build Expo 2025

Date: OCT 22

Time: 9:30 AM

Location: 1 Convention Centre Pl, South Wharf

Presenter: Jeremy Spencer

NOVEMBER

Upskill Now Masterclass (Thermal)

Date: NOV 20

Time: 12:00 PM

Location: ONLINE (AEDT)

Presenter: David Canciello |
Consulting Director | Davita

Thinking outside the box for high performance, healthy buildings

Date: NOV 25

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: ONLINE (AEDT)

Presenter: Andy Russell



PUBLICATIONS REFERENCED IN THIS ISSUE

The Age

AFR

Architecture & Design

Courier Mail

The Australian

The Fifth Estate

Allhomes

HVAC&R News

Sourceable

Green Magazine

QPC

Stay connected with Design Matters National – visit our [Events Calendar](#) for all upcoming events, explore our [CPD Resources](#) for on-demand training, and check out the [Design Matters National website](#) for the latest news and member information.

Thank you for reading!

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