

MultiProof for modern construction

Builders and companies building standardised designs, including those using modern manufacturing methods, may be eligible to take advantage of MBIE's MultiProof consent pathway.

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THE MINISTRY of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) introduced national multiple-use approval (MultiProof) in 2010 to fast track the building consent process (see *Build 167, The MultiProof path*, pages 68–69).

Fast tracks consents for standardised designs

A MultiProof establishes that the plans and specifications to which it relates comply with the New Zealand Building Code. It focuses on design rather than construction methods and has certain conditions including that the applicant has the intent and ability to build an approved MultiProof design at least 10 times over 2 years.

A MultiProof has the advantage of a shorter building consent processing timeframe. Building consent applications lodged with a MultiProof, for example, must be processed by a building consent authority (BCA) within 10 working days instead of the usual 20 working days.

This results in time and cost efficiencies for builders and clients and can provide a competitive advantage to companies using a MultiProof. As a MultiProof relates to standardised designs only, it can be ideal for buildings constructed with modern manufacturing methods such as off-site manufacture that generally replicate the same building design.

Uptake of MultiProof is low

Despite these advantages, analysis of MBIE's publicly accessible MultiProof Register indicates that uptake of MultiProof remains slow.

As seen in Figure 1, between February 2010 and December 2018, a total of 146 MultiProofs were issued - mostly for residential buildings (91%). A total of 44 companies hold the 146 MultiProofs approved by MBIE over the same time period (see Figure 2). Of these companies, almost half hold one MultiProof each (45%).

Opportunities to increase MultiProof use

Builders and companies who construct standardised designs, using modern manufacturing methods or not, have the opportunity to apply for a MultiProof. The process for doing this is outlined at MBIE's Building Performance website www.building.govt.nz - search MultiProof.

There are several potential opportunities to increase the use of MultiProof:

- Increasing awareness of the MultiProof pathway for builders or companies producing standardised designs.
- Reviewing the MultiProof eligibility criteria. For example, reducing the number of times an approved MultiProof design must be built over a certain time period or extending the time period. Currently, the applicant must have the intent and ability to build an approved MultiProof design at least 10 times over 2 years.
- Extending the scope of the MultiProof pathway to apply to standardised construction methods, such as modern methods of construction, as well as to standardised designs. MBIE's current building system legislative reform programme specifically refers to modern methods

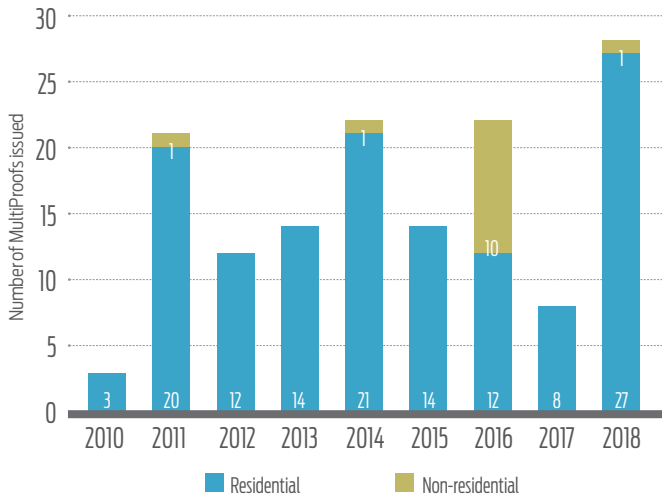


Figure 1: Total number of MultiProofs issued per calendar year, February 2010–December 2018.

of construction. Any new legislation resulting from this programme may clarify the status of modern methods of construction in relation to building consents, including the MultiProof pathway.

- Encouraging the use of MultiProof for non-residential buildings. Figure 1 indicates a peak of non-residential MultiProofs approved in 2016, including for classrooms, marquees, shops and preschools. This is an anomaly, however. Greater communication regarding the possibility of using MultiProof for non-residential buildings could increase uptake.
- Scaling-up the number of companies who hold multiple MultiProofs. Currently, 45% of companies who hold a MultiProof only hold one MultiProof (Figure 2). These companies could be incentivised to apply for a MultiProof for other standardised designs within their portfolios

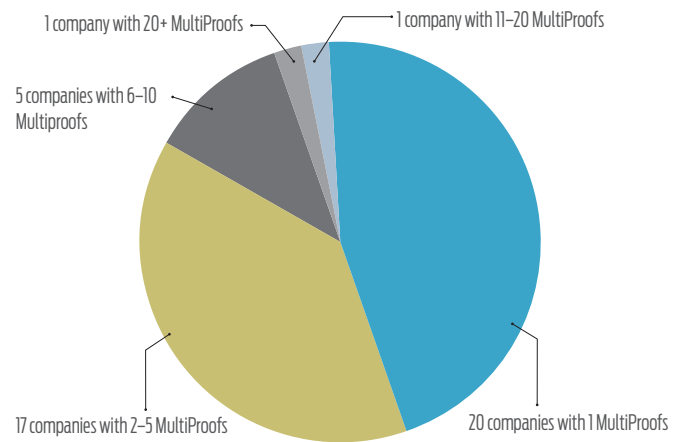


Figure 2: Total number of MultiProofs issued per company, February 2010–December 2018.

- through mechanisms such as reduced fees for multiple applications.
- Understanding any barriers that may exist for the uptake of MultiProof - for example, whether the application process is fit for purpose and whether the process is duplicated by other fast-track or streamlined building consent processes used by some BCAs.

What do you think about the MultiProof pathway?

The MultiProof pathway provides a great opportunity for builders of standardised designs, including those utilising modern manufacturing methods, to save time and money on building consents.

Why, then, aren't MultiProof consents proving as popular as anticipated? Send your thoughts on this subject to Toni Kennerley at toni@planalytics.co.nz. Any feedback received will be shared with MBIE and BRANZ. ◀