

14 November 2009

HIA Welcomes Stay On 6-Star

Australia's largest building group, the HIA has welcomed a decision of the Building Ministers' Forum to defer consideration of new energy efficiency regulation of new dwellings.

HIA's Managing Director, Shane Goodwin said that the housing industry recognised that new homes had to play a part in reducing Greenhouse Gas emissions. However, the 6-star controls would have next to no effect on reducing either energy consumption or Greenhouse Gas emissions but would increase significantly the cost of new dwellings.

"The industry has raised a host of concerns in response to the official regulatory impact assessment and the responsible thing to do was to allow more time for these issues to be considered carefully and the RIS process to be completed," said Shane Goodwin.

"In reviewing 6-star regulation, it is vital that government has regard for the impact of the controls on the supply of new housing, the competitive position of smaller-volume builders and the potential for imported building products to replace locally-made materials and local jobs.

"The Government's current strategy for emissions reductions in the housing sector is untargeted. It would be appropriate for government to work with industry in developing a 'whole-of-house' approach that targets reductions in Greenhouse Gas emissions from new and established dwellings.

"Australia lacks the 'whole-of-house' assessment tools and appropriate performance benchmarks for Greenhouse Gas reductions that would enable builders and consumers to identify suitable solutions to achieve lower emissions in the most cost-effective way.

"The current star-rating system gives no credits or star-rating points to consumers who install renewable energy systems, such as photovoltaic cells on their roof to power a house. If consumers are prepared to invest in renewable energy to have for example, more windows, then they should be allowed to. The current regulatory approach is reducing consumer choice and will 'dumb-down' design in housing.

For further information:

Shane Goodwin 0418 568 889
Graham Wolfe 0419 751 188