

UNDERSTANDING CLASS 1B BUILDINGS: WHAT DECISION-MAKERS NEED TO KNOW

Understand what Class 1b accommodation means and why it matters for anyone managing short-term lodging on farms or remote sites.

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What Is a Class 1b Accommodation Type?

You don't hear people talking about "Class 1b" every day. But if you're setting up accommodation for workers, contractors, or short-term tenants—especially in regional or remote settings—it's something you'll want to understand, or at least be sure that your builder does.

A good builder or supplier should already be across this classification. If they're not, that's your cue to ask more questions.

The Basics of Class 1b

Under the [National Construction Code \(NCC\)](#), Class 1b covers small-scale shared accommodation. Specifically, it applies to:

- **Boarding houses, guest houses or hostels** with a total floor area under 300 m², and typically fewer than 12 occupants.
- **Four or more separate units or rooms** on a single property, used for short-term accommodation.

This classification sits between single residences and commercial lodging. It's designed for practical, short-stay setups—not family living, not long-term tenancy.

Where It Applies

Class 1b is commonly used for accommodation such as:

- **Farmworker quarters** during harvest seasons
- **Contractor housing** on infrastructure or mining sites
- **Short-stay cabins** on rural or remote properties
- **Community-based transitional housing** for councils or services

Many owners and operators who are smart about their investment in their land and workers already lean on Class 1b when planning out low-maintenance, short-term accommodation.

The classification isn't talked about until late in a project—but it affects decisions made from the very start. If your supplier or builder understands it from day one, the rest flows a lot smoother.

Why the Classification Matters

Getting the right classification is more than just ticking a box. It affects:

- Council approvals
- Fire safety compliance
- Accessibility requirements
- Insurance coverage

It also affects whether you'll be asked to upgrade something after the fact—which is the last thing you want once people are already booked in to stay.

If your project involves rotating workers, short stays or accommodation tied to a commercial operation, it's worth confirming you're within the Class 1b scope. You can check a state-based guide like the [QBCC resource](#) to get a feel for what's expected.



Key Compliance Features

For Class 1b accommodation, there are some specific standards that need to be followed. These often include:

- Smoke alarms and fire protection measures
- Accessible paths and doorways, especially if units are for rent or used in a commercial way
- Minimum facilities like toilets and handwashing stations, depending on the number of occupants

These aren't just regulations—they're also about making sure people staying in your accommodation are safe, and that you're protected from liability.

You can find more detail via [Disability Access Consultants](#), particularly if your setup involves rentals or conversions.

Modular Units and Class 1b

Some small-scale modular accommodation setups fall under Class 1b. That's because they're often used for short-term or seasonal use, involve multiple units on a single site, and stay under the size and occupancy limits.

It's a common classification among Australian managers making informed decisions about durable accommodation—particularly those who value clear compliance and minimal maintenance.

If you're considering this setup, see how [superior modular accommodation](#) for workers fits within these guidelines.

Final Word

If you're managing a property that needs accommodation for workers, tenants or short-term occupants, it's worth confirming whether Class 1b applies.

GETTING IT RIGHT EARLY IN THE PROCESS CAN HELP WITH APPROVALS, SAFETY COMPLIANCE, AND LONG-TERM PEACE OF MIND.



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