



## Association of Australian Certifiers

T 1300 735 935

E [hello@aacertifiers.com.au](mailto:hello@aacertifiers.com.au)

W: [aacertifiers.com.au](http://aacertifiers.com.au)

GPO Box 5090 Sydney NSW 2001

### Industry calls for urgent reform of Planning Portal

The state's Planning Portal is not fit for purpose and is putting a handbrake on the delivery of new homes and apartments in the middle of a statewide housing crisis, according to industry professionals.

The Association of Australian Certifiers (AAC), which represents the interests of professionals actively participating in the certification of building and subdivision works in New South Wales has requested ongoing and urgent discussions with the NSW Government and the relevant Departments in an effort to resolve the many issues with the portal which is being felt right across the industry.

“From the beginning, industry groups have supported the government in its delivery of the Portal, but we are now hamstrung because the technology is not fit for purpose,” said Jill Brookfield, CEO of the Association of Australian Certifiers.

“What we are looking for is:

- Meaningful Training for Certifiers and their Administration staff on the portal
- Reinstate the Certifier helpline and resource IT people with in-depth knowledge of the system from the council/certifier side
- Allow each step to have a Certifier ‘Not applicable to this application’ button for each page of the determination and upload parts of the portal
- Meaningful dialogue and testing before each new change to the portal occurs, make it mandatory to enable real time testing for a wide range of certifiers and Councils before releasing a change to the portal - stop the surprise changes.

“Every update brings a new set of problems, and it's one step forward, three steps back.

“As one Certifier told me this morning, they will have to start telling clients they'll be unable to move into their new place for Christmas because the Occupation Certificate just won't be ready.

“The housing crisis is well known, and has rightly been the focus of the Government, but the actual tools required for approval have not kept up with demand and is one of the main reasons for such a housing shortage.

“The Portal is counter intuitive in how information must be submitted and does not recognise the complex nature of what is required – it's a well-known secret among those in certification and planning that the government is being let down by its technology.

“The technology is failing the NSW building sector and has become a direct barrier for Certifiers who are endeavouring to issue Occupation Certificates to deliver new homes and keep the economy moving.



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“It’s not just Certifiers who are battling with the Portal. The AAC is aware homeowners struggle with the platform as do other industry practitioners who meet similar barriers to use the Portal effectively.

“It is upsetting when I see the Premier and his Cabinet colleagues trying to solve the housing crisis because everyone on the inside knows they are being badly let down, but sadly nothing is changing.

“There is no magic bullet when it comes to the housing issues that NSW is currently facing, but things that can be controlled should be immediately rectified to clear the backlog of approvals.

“Until an urgent fix is made, sadly, the residents of NSW will continue to suffer,” Ms Brookfield said.

**Media Contact – Damian Kelly 0401 773 825**