

HB 50—2004

Glossary of Building Terms



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GLOSSARY OF BUILDING TERMS

FIFTH EDITION — FULLY REVISED

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ABSTRACT

This Handbook is not an Australian Standard and has not been developed and approved using the full transparency and consensus processes that underpin Australian Standards.

As a Handbook it has, however, been subject to a level of peer review.

For further advice on the status of this document see Standardization Guide 13, *Publications of Lower Level of Transparency and Consensus*, which is available at the following web address:

<https://committees.standards.com.au/POLICY/SG-013/STANDARDIZATIONGUIDE-SG-013.HTM>

Fully revised and expanded, the fifth edition of the Glossary of Building Terms includes selected terms from 86 Australian and Australian/New Zealand Standards called up by the Building Code of Australia. It replaces the fourth edition (1994) of the Glossary of Building Terms.

Drawn from the newly developed database of some 13,500 building, building construction and facility management terminology, the Fifth Edition of the Glossary of Building Terms is the first of a future range of fully harmonized special-interest sub-glossaries. It combines approximately 11,000 terms into an alphabetical, dictionary-type listing, and a number of these terms are supported by illustrations.

Originated as 'Glossary of Building and Planning Terms' 1975.
Second edition 1978.
Third edition 'Glossary of Building Terms' 1985.
Previous edition 1994.
Fifth edition 2004.

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PREFACE

Words are the essence of communication. Unless all parties to a communication have a clear and common understanding of the meaning of the words or terms used, error, misunderstanding or conflict is likely to occur, which can lead to unnecessary cost and/or wasteful use of resources. The purpose of a glossary or dictionary of terms is to provide precise unambiguous meanings to terms.

In 1995 the Construction Industry Development Agency (CIDA*) said –

One of the foremost challenges facing the construction industry today is the need to address the information management requirements of the industry.

It continued

There is agreement among all sectors of the construction industry that there is a greater need to have easier access to standardized information relevant to each industry sector.

To this end, each sector needs to identify their particular information requirements to assist this process.

A great deal has been accomplished since then, but much of it is sector-based and lacks necessary integration. With this background and the experience gained with previous editions, the fifth Edition of the Glossary of Building Terms (HB 50) has been produced.

The objective of this edition is to establish an industry-agreed method of identifying and describing the concepts and objects that project decision-makers use in their daily activities.

The fifth Edition of the Glossary includes:

- A dramatic increase in the number of terms.

Terms from the Building Code of Australia and the Standards it calls up have been added to those found in the fourth Edition. The number of terms has jumped from approximately 6,000 to about 11,000 in the hardcopy.

- Broad-based industry involvement.

Over 150 Standards Australia Technical committees, ranging from the Communications Cabling committee to the Soils Testing committee, and over 90 national organizations were asked to assist by adding and revising terms relevant to their particular industry sector.

- The development of software to enable the terms to be managed as a single database and published as a series of sub-glossaries.

Standards Australia International has developed software that will manage these terms as a single database but permit a selection to be published as an application-specific sub-glossary.

This hardcopy document, the fifth Edition of the Glossary of Building Terms, is published as a sub-glossary of the electronic database. It contains approximately 11,000 terms.

This document lays the foundation for:

- Expanding the Glossary to include all Standardization terms that are relevant to the production, operation, renovation and disposal of built facilities.
- Restructuring terms to further facilitate electronic processing and enable industry to access and exchange 'intelligent data'.
- Greater industry involvement to ensure that the terms and format meet industry needs.

- Development and publication of sub-glossaries in both electronic and hardcopy form.
- Changing the process of Glossary management from periodic publication to continuous review and improvement – with online access.

Reflecting the dynamic nature of the Glossary's new role, it is now held as a single database to which interested parties can introduce and adjust terms relevant to their respective areas of concern. These terms will be uniquely identified so that the group can have them extracted and published – in a variety of hardcopy and electronic formats – as a sub-glossary.

(For example the terms in each Australian Standard are established as a sub-glossary and are available for inclusion in that publication. Those responsible for other regulatory documents will be able to do likewise. Equally, these terms will be available to industry associations interested in establishing and publishing sub-glossaries of terms and definitions relevant to their members.)

In this way each 'industry' group – regulatory authority, Standards committee, industry association, or commercial enterprise – can address its specific needs but do so in a manner that will contribute to harmonization and facilitate development and maintenance of an industry-agreed set of terms and definitions.

Users of this Edition will find some duplication and overlapping terms whose definitions need to be either broadened, or narrowed. This is a consequence of bringing material together from a variety of sources. While the editors have revised a significant number of terms and definitions, it was decided that the revision of many terms should be left to the relevant industry groups – in particular, those responsible for the industry's Codes and Standards. In such instances, the editor's role was limited to identifying the problem and making recommendations. The final decision as to what is to change and when the change is to occur has to be left to the relevant industry committee(s).

While the overall purpose of this document is to standardize the definitions for a given term, this document represents a transition stage. The definitions of terms given in this document do not override the definitions of other Standards.

Clearly, the scope and fluid nature of the Glossary makes a cooperative, sustained industry-wide initiative essential. Your support of this continuing work is encouraged – first as a member of an industry group critically reviewing the terms and associated definitions and second, as an individual using the Glossary by providing feedback on how it might better meet your needs.

* CIDA, (1995), Construction Industry Development Agency, A Construction Industry Innovation Strategy, Sydney.

BACKGROUND TO THE FIFTH EDITION

The Fifth Edition of the Glossary of Building Terms traces its origins to the *Short Glossary of Building Terms* published in 1949 by the then Commonwealth of Australia Department of National Development. The objective of the ancestral document was “to provide clear and simply-phrased definitions of common building terms with illustrations, where appropriate” and this objective has been retained. After five editions of the Short Glossary between 1949 and 1973 under the aegis of the Commonwealth of Australia, the NCRB took over the work on the Glossary in 1974 and widened its scope. The first NCRB *Glossary of Building and Planning Terms* was published in 1975 by the Australian Government Publishing Service and was supported by the Australian Institute of Building. The 180-page document was prepared by the ACT group of the NCRB, under the chairmanship of Don McLagan, and was edited by John Cottee. It also contained input from most Australian Commonwealth and State works and housing authorities, the CSIRO, and the former New Zealand Ministry of Works.

The First Edition sold out within three years, and a revised and enlarged Second Edition was prepared by a panel of NCRB member authorities, and edited by Don McLagan. It was published for the NCRB by the National Capital Planning Commission and released in April 1978. Within six years, stocks had been exhausted, and a third and expanded edition was developed and edited by Hans Milton, a past chairman of the NCRB. Renamed the *Glossary of Australian Building Terms* to reflect its primary focus, the third edition was published for NCRB in September 1985 by SBIC Australia Pty. Ltd., the holding company of the Sydney Building Information Centre. Ten thousand copies were sold by early 1993.

The expanded Fourth Edition of the NCRB Glossary (also edited by Hans Milton) was published in 1994 under a cooperative agreement between the NCRB, Standards Australia and Suppliers Index Pty. Ltd., bringing together technical, financial, production and marketing resources. The Glossary included a large number of building-related definitions contained in English language reference sources from Australia, New Zealand, Britain and North America.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The editors would like to acknowledge the large number of contributions made by Regulatory Authorities, Industry Associations, Standards Committees, Chairmen of Standards Committees and Standards Australia staff, to enable the Glossary to be as comprehensive and accurate as possible. Any errors and shortcomings in the present version arising from reconciling the advice from the broad spectrum of interests represented above are the responsibility of the editors and not of those who provided the input.

Special acknowledgement also goes to Peter Montgomery and Diana Lau who were instrumental in the development of the software for the glossary.

PRESENTATION AND USE OF THE GLOSSARY

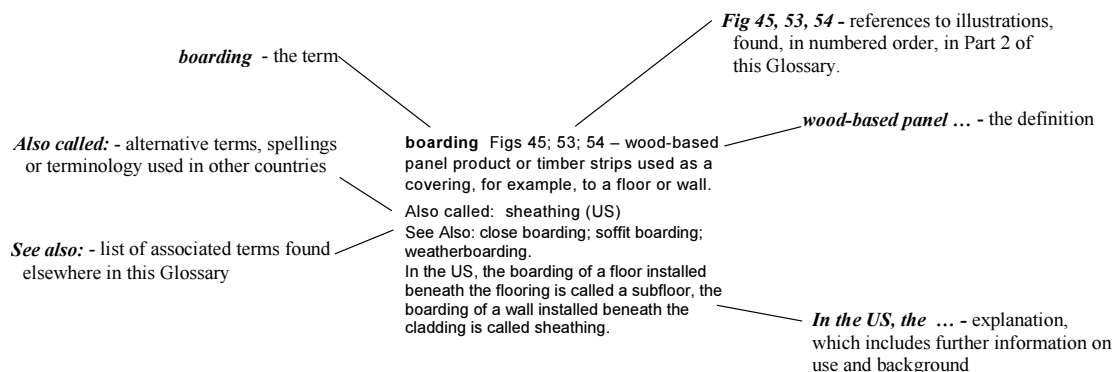
Subdivision of the Glossary

The Glossary of Building Terms contains two Parts:

- (a) Part 1, which represents the largest portion of the Glossary and contains a comprehensive, alphabetical list of terms used in building and construction, together with their definitions, and cross-references. Included in the list are some abbreviations for various terms used.
- (b) Part 2, which provides a set of over 80 illustrations of general and specific terms for items or techniques used in building, where such illustrations assist in the conceptualization and better understanding of a term. The illustrations are representative only and not necessarily to scale.

How to use the glossary

The terms are arranged alphabetically. The listing for a typical term consists of these parts:



To enable similar terms to be grouped alongside each other and thus give the user a comprehensive view of similar terms without the use of a large list under 'See Also' entailing much flicking backwards and forwards use has been made of:

- (a) Commas – to distinguish between types.
eg, valve, ball; valve, butterfly; valve, check etc.
- (b) Brackets – to define context.
eg, valve (isolating); valve (level control); valve (scour); etc.

As searches are not likely to be made for terms formatted in this style, alternatives are provided for the normally formatted term, eg, ball valve; butterfly valve; isolating valve; level control valve, with the appropriate cross-reference to the above listing. Alternative terms are shown in *italic* type together with a 'See' reference to the primary term.

This Glossary uses Australian spelling of words in the form used in the Macquarie Dictionary. Any US differences in spelling are indicated where this is considered to be relevant. However, the endings 'ize' and 'ization' have been adopted in preference to 'ise' and 'isation' in line with international Standards and Standards Australia usage.

The header on each even page identifies the first word on the page and conversely the header on the odd page identifies the last word on the page.

Where there are multiple definitions of a term, these are identified by a superscript number following the term.

PART 1

ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS