

CIOB

Building Safety Regulation in a Changing World: Global Lessons for Reform

Monday 14 September

CIOB

Welcome

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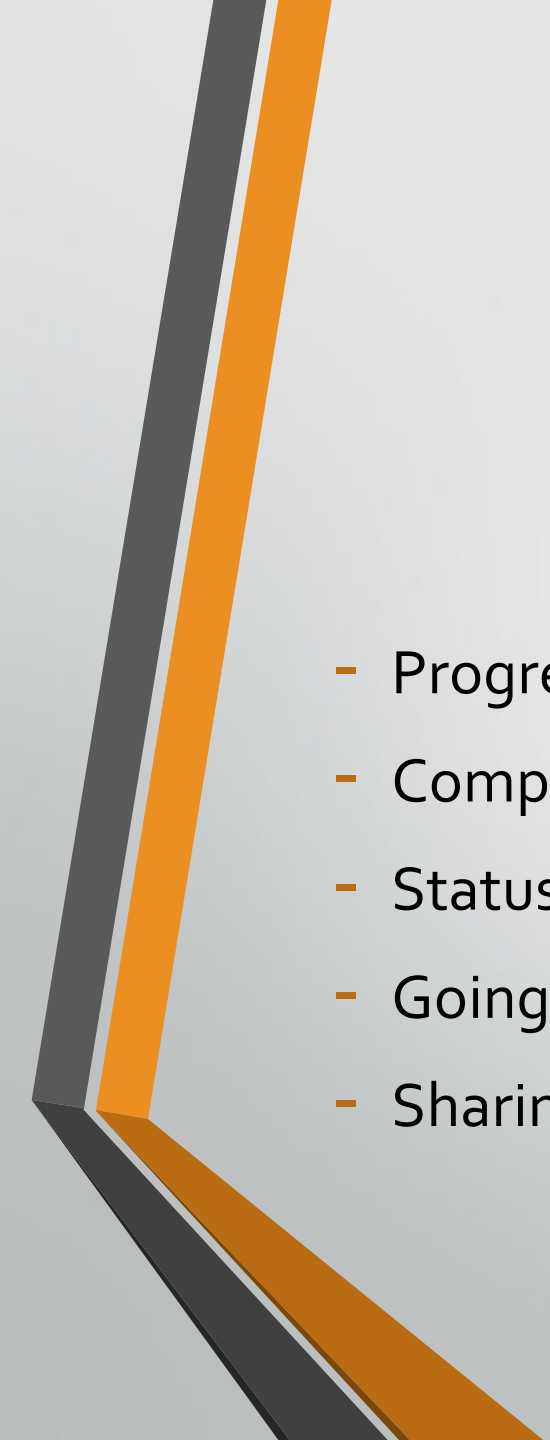


Building Safety Regulation in a changing world– Global Lessons for Reform- a UK perspective

CIOB Webinar

14th September 2026

Dame Judith Hackitt DBE
FREng



Topics to cover today

- Progress so far and what we've learned
- Competence, why it matters so much and what else is needed
- Status of the programme of reform of the regulatory system
- Going Beyond Compliance and Redefining Our purpose
- Sharing knowledge and building resilience for the future

The journey so far

- Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety
- Public Inquiry into Grenfell Tower disaster
- Strong commitment from Government to make lasting change
- Driving the much needed Industry culture change is a challenge but it is happening
- New single regulator to drive change, work with industry and oversee the whole system



Single Construction Regulator Prospectus

- Design and Construction of Buildings
- Construction Products Testing and Assurance
- Professions and competence
- 3 “Pillars” of work which overlap and interconnect
- Each pillar at different stages of development/maturity

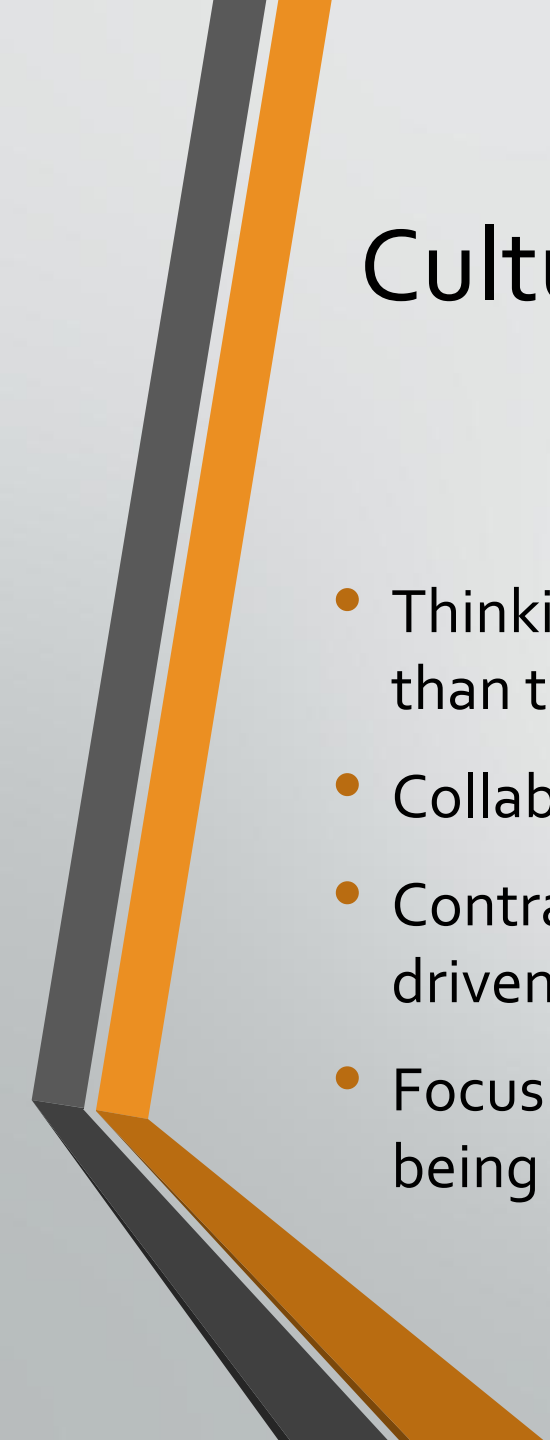
Competence

- Competence of individuals and organisations needs a step change
- Competence goes beyond knowledge and skills - behaviours and feeling a sense of responsibility are
- Focusing on the final outcome vs cost as the main driver
- Huge effort has gone into defining competences across the whole of the built environment
- Building Control professionals have been in the lead but others must do more
- Recent developments on Fire Engineering are very welcome but other professions must follow a similar path
- Professions review is crucial going forward



Delivering new levels of competence and different behaviours

- Competence is about more than technical knowledge
 - Skills, Knowledge, Experience, Behaviours
 - Assurance of competence for safety critical roles
 - Continuous meaningful learning, development and reaccreditation
 - Looking beyond your own silo of knowledge and working collaboratively with others to deliver the best outcome, not just “do your bit”



Culture change needs others to act differently too

- Thinking about buildings as systems which must work effectively – more than the sum of the parts
- Collaboration and transparency
- Contracts and procurement must drive those positive behaviours not be driven by cost, penalty clauses and the threat of litigation
- Focus on delivering good outcomes not simply on compliance – or avoiding being caught

Beyond compliance

- Being compliant is about doing the bare minimum that is required
- The regulatory regime has shifted from prescriptive tick box guidance and rules to outcomes based approach
- Guidance is still very important to help people understand what good looks like and what is expected
- Competent people are able to make assessments and judgments not just blindly follow rules
- Creates real opportunity for ***responsible*** innovation in what we do and how we work

Construction Products Regulation – a key pillar of the single regulatory system

- A widespread challenge to improve assurance of safety critical products
- Cladding was one such failure but we know the challenges are much greater than that
- Proposed General Safety Requirement – means very significant change in thinking for the whole supply chain

[Heat Soaked Thermally Toughened Glass: Sector Regulatory Report - GOV.UK](#)



The challenges of so much change and transition

- Embedding learning as we progress
- New build vs buildings already in occupation
- Setting up new regulatory regime(s)
- Raising competence and managing retention of people and knowledge
- Keeping all stakeholders informed
- Maintaining momentum alongside change
- Consultation Overload
- Managing/coordinating the overall vision/goal
- Humility to learn from others

Summary

- This is a long but vital journey which involves us all
- Focus on the prize/the goal
 - Buildings of quality which are safe
 - Recognition for those who do the right thing
 - Sanctions for those who do not comply
- A built environment which we can all have confidence and pride in
- Not a choice, no matter how difficult it gets – the only meaningful legacy we can offer
- This is your opportunity to be involved in driving a change programme that will make a positive difference to so many people's quality of life around the world not just here at home



THE WORLD BANK

DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS • POLICY INDICATORS

B-READY

**From codes on paper
to systems in practice**

Jayashree Srinivasan
World Bank
Development Economics
Policy Indicators Group

CIOB-IBQC Seminar
Sep. 14, 2026

**BUSINESS
READY**

What is B-Ready?

Business Ready (B-READY) is an assessment of the business and investment climate that provides a **global dataset** to support reforms, strengthen the private sector, promote investment, and drive economic growth



101 Economies Assessed

Covering all income levels and regions — from fragile states to OECD members — providing a global benchmark for regulatory quality.



Three Dimensions per Topic

Each topic is assessed on the quality of regulations, the quality of public services and transparency, and the real-world efficiency of regulatory processes.



Private-Sector Expert Data

Collected from construction firms, engineers, and lawyers in each economy — cross-validated with enterprise survey data from businesses on the ground.



10 Topics, Including Construction

B-READY covers 10 areas of business regulation. Today's focus: the building safety dimensions of the Business Location topic — codes and standards, inspection and competence, occupancy control, and accountability.

The Codes Are Written. The Ecology Is Thinner

*B-READY separates the rules on the books (Pillar 1) from the systems that deliver them (Pillar 2) and their real-world efficiency (Pillar 3) - **each scored 0–100** - covering Building Permits, Environmental Permits & Zoning*

PILLAR 1 Regulatory Quality

Rules on the Books

- Building codes & safety standards
- Energy efficiency requirements
- Zoning & land use maps
- Environmental permit frameworks
- Dispute mechanisms for permits

67.8

Global average score

PILLAR 2 Public Services & Transparency

Can firms find info and file online?

- Digital building permit platforms
- Digital environmental permit systems
- GIS / spatial data integration
- Transparency of fees, plans & docs
- Online dispute filing

43.2

Global average score

PILLAR 3 Operational Efficiency

How long? How much?

- Building permit time (calendar days)
- Building permit cost (% GNI per capita)
- Construction permit time (Enterprise Survey)
- Environmental permit time (calendar days)
- Environmental permit cost (% GNI per capita)

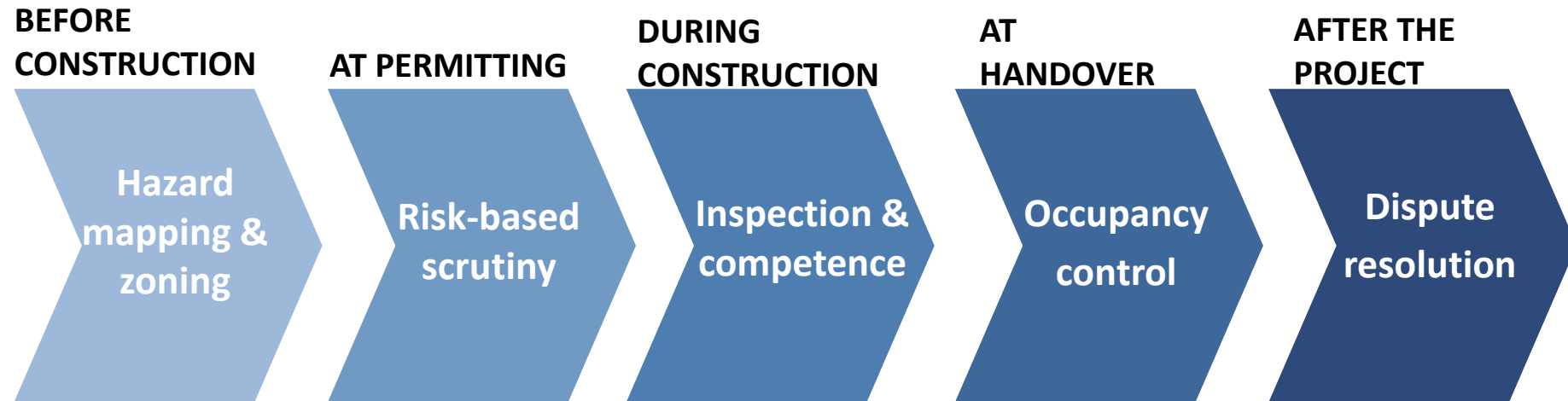
68.3

Global average score

The rules are written. But when intent hits public service delivery, functionality plummets.

One Project, Five Encounters with the System

How the evidence maps to the life of a building project



The data has something to say at each encounter — then we zoom out to all 101 economies at once.

The rules are broadly written; the machinery behind them is thinner

77%

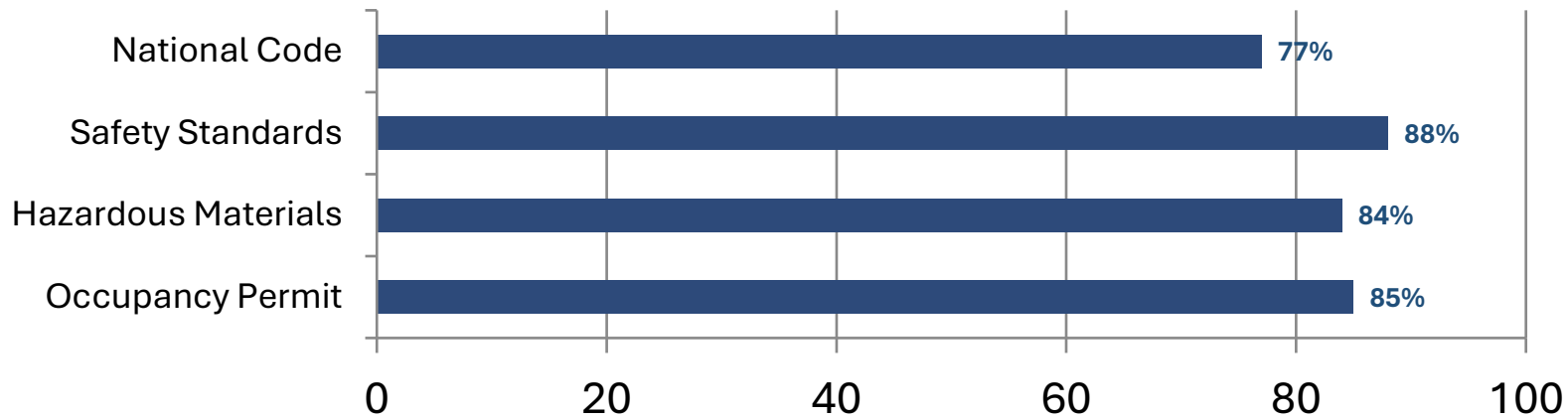
Share of economies
with a unified national
building code

95%

of economies
mandate fire
safety standards for
all construction

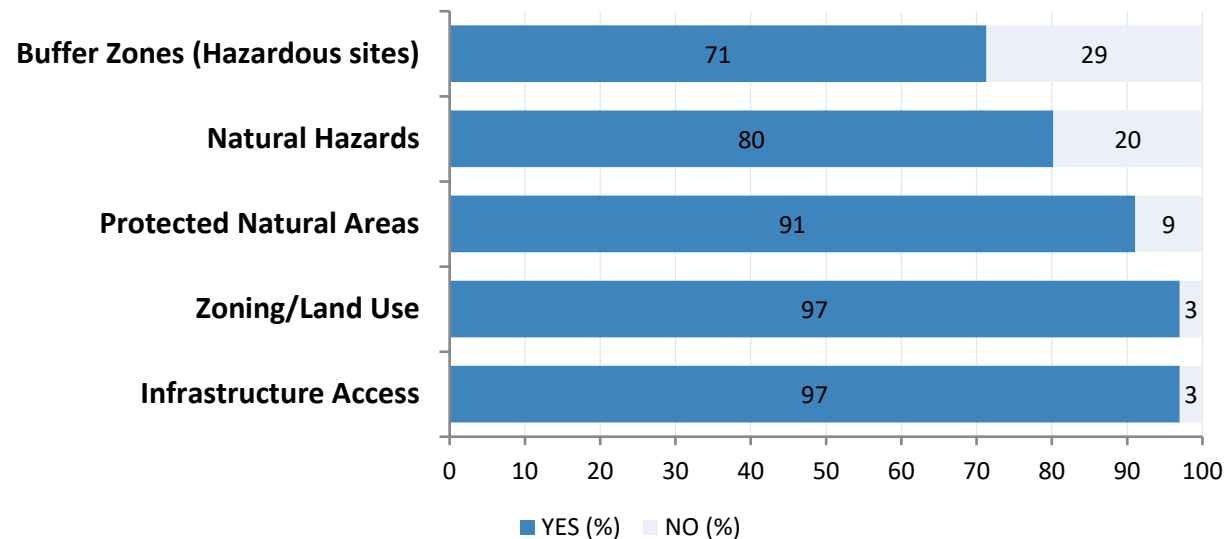
85%

require an
occupancy
permit before use



The paper layer: The legislative layer is close to universal — including fire safety standards in 95% of economies. But a code cannot inspect a building, discipline a practitioner, or resolve a dispute. Whether the machinery exists to give these rules force is what the rest of the data answers — layer by layer.

Hazard Mapping: Disaster Avoidance Begins Before the Permit



From maps on paper to maps in systems

97% — regulations require land-use maps

25% — spatial plans accessible in a system usable for permitting

20% — full GIS integration between permitting agencies

One in five economies lacks natural hazard maps; nearly three in ten lack buffers around hazardous facilities. There, permits are issued blind - quietly building a stock of exposure that becomes visible only after the event.

Risk-based scrutiny: classification is universal, calibration is not



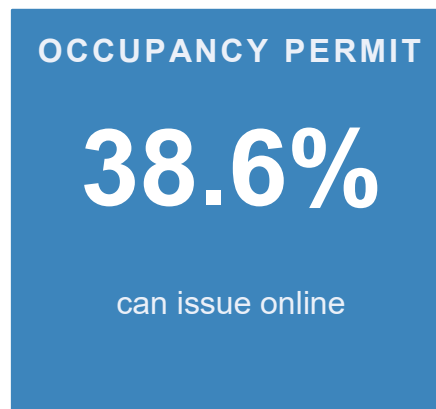
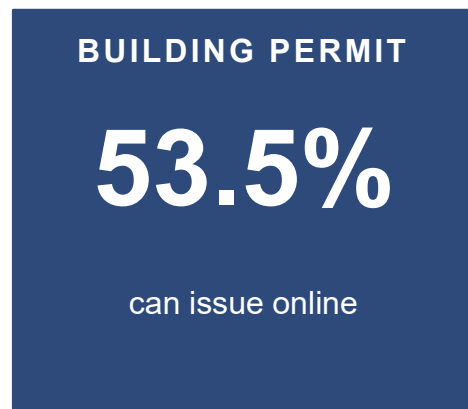
Takeaway: Classification without calibration leaves scrutiny untargeted — and the gap is flat across income groups: 68% of high-income and 67% of low-income economies calibrate. This is a global blind spot, not a development gap.

The chain of responsibility: inspection is mandated, the layer beneath it is thinner

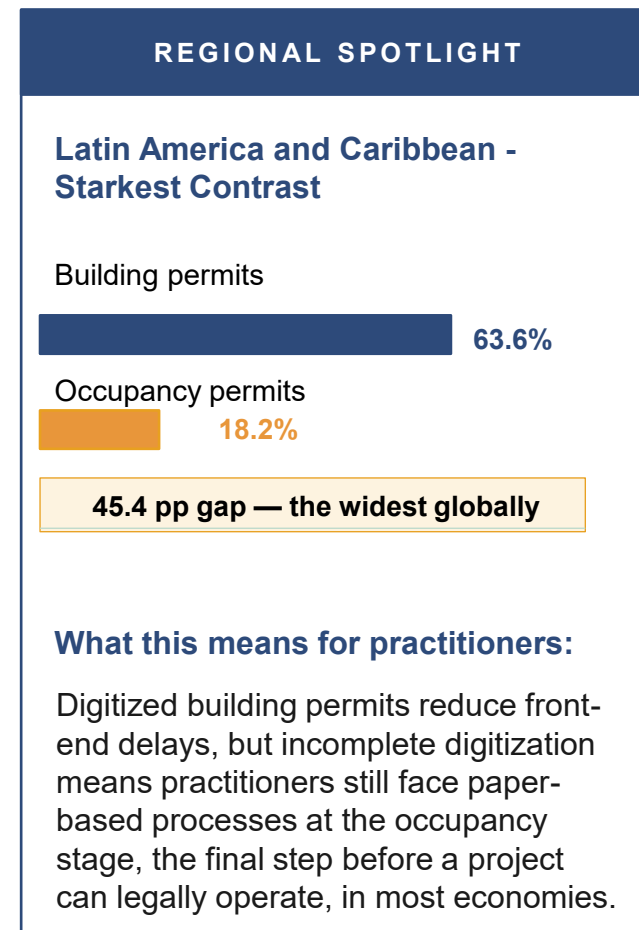


Takeaway: 88% of economies empower an enforcement authority to act on non-compliant construction — but enforcement is only as strong as the competence and clarity of the inspection system behind it.

Occupancy permit digitization lags behind building permits



Globally, more than half of economies **can digitally issue building permits**, yet only **38.6%** extend that capability to occupancy permits, the final legal gateway before construction can be occupied.



Building Permit Disputes: Unresolved Disputes Leave Risk in Place

Independent third-party appeal is mandated in fewer than 1 in 3 economies — and is rarely accessible online

INDEPENDENT APPEAL

31%

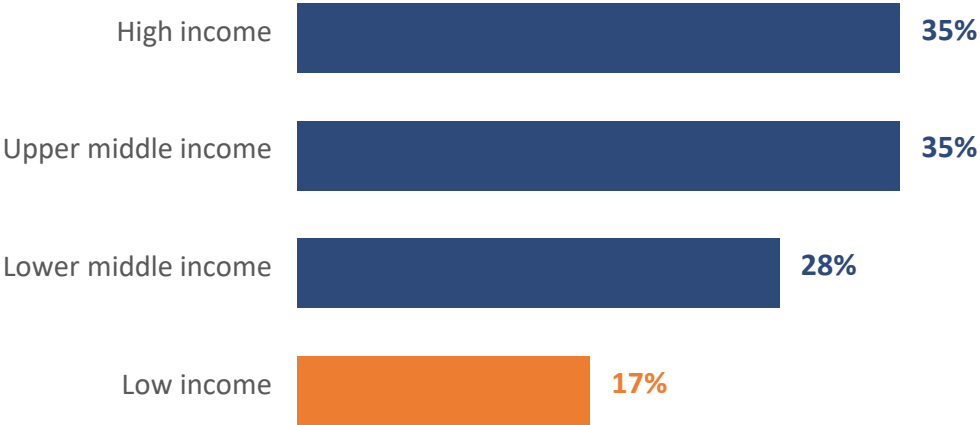
of economies mandate independent third-party appeal of permit decisions

24%

allow online filing of permit appeals

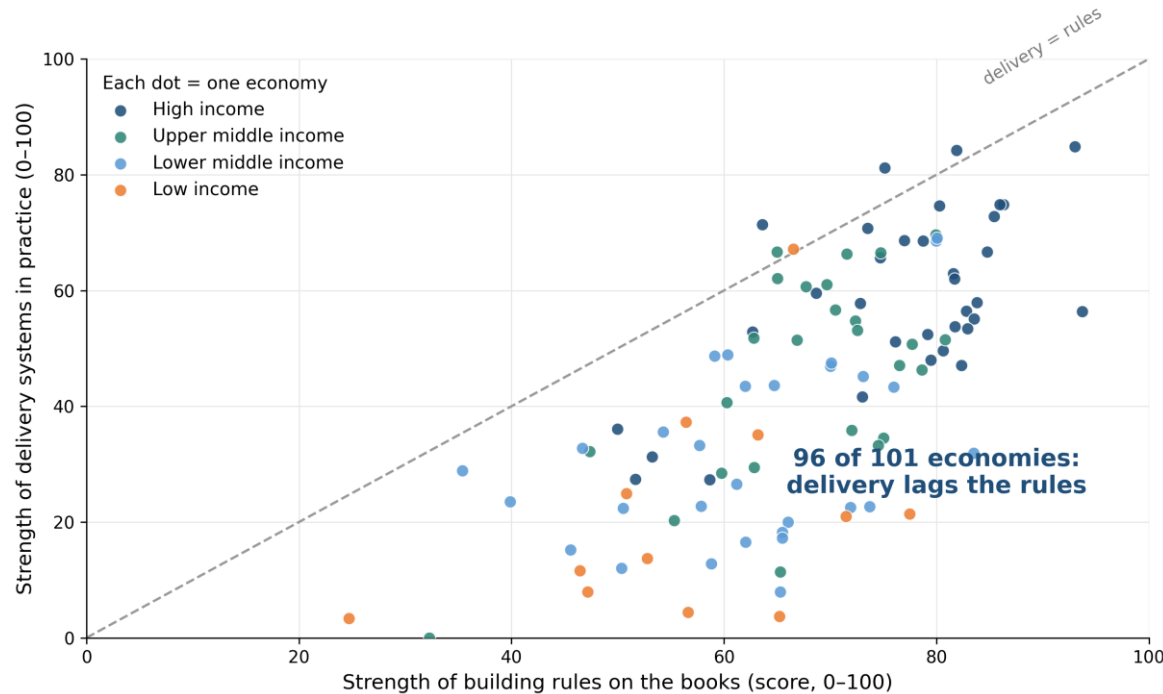
Independent appeal thins with income

Share of economies mandating independent appeal, by income group



Reform implication: Where courts are the only pathway to challenge a permit decision, disputes are slow and costly — and a defect in dispute is a defect in place. Independent review bodies are a tractable institutional reform: they do not require rewriting the building code.

Rules Travel; Regulatory Ecosystems Do Not



Strengthening delivery systems — not rewriting codes — is the most tractable path to better outcomes.

Key Findings

96/101

economies
score lower on
delivery than
on rules

24 pts

median gap
between rules
and delivery

70 pts

spread in
delivery
scores among
economies
with similar
rules

SAME RULES, DIFFERENT SYSTEMS

Delivery scores range from near 0 to 70 among economies with similar rules and incomes. Income doesn't determine delivery — reform choices do.

WHY IMPORTED CODES DISAPPOINT

Codes are adopted; the institutions that administer them are not. The paper-to-practice gap is the widest - and most reformable - margin in the data.

System Failures Need a Systems Reading: Four Patterns

Four patterns from 101 economies — offered as observations from the data, not prescriptions. Country context determines what is feasible and what comes first.



Adoption Is Not Assurance

Building codes and safety standards are widely adopted, but the machinery that verifies compliance — qualified inspectors, clear responsibility, final inspection — is far less consistent.



The Final Gateway Lags

Occupancy control is the least digitized stage of the permit process. The step that certifies a building is safe to occupy remains paper-based in most economies.



Accountability Is the Thinnest Layer

Fewer than one in three economies provide an independent pathway to challenge a permit decision. Where courts are the only recourse, redress is slow and costly.



Income Does Not Determine Outcomes

Comparable economies diverge most on service delivery and oversight. Some lower-income economies outperform wealthier peers — reform choices matter, not just resources.

**Codes alone do not deliver safety.
Systems do.**

NOTE: B-READY does not measure insurance or liability settings; the evidence presented covers part of the regulatory system, not all of it.

Thank You

Jayashree Srinivasan

Development Economics Policy Indicators Group
The World Bank

worldbank.org/en/businessready

Building Regulations Atlas

(interactive, economy-by-economy)

<https://www.gfdrr.org/en/building-regulations-atlas>



THE IBQC MODEL BUILDING ACT

Designing regulation to build better,
not build back better

**Adjunct Professor Kim Lovegrove DLitt (honoris causa), MSE,
RML**

Chair, International Building Quality Centre & founder of Lovegrove and
Cotton Construction and Planning Lawyers



**THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL
MODEL BUILDING ACT**

A building code is not a building control ecosystem

Technical codes are only one part of building control.



One legible hierarchy

Each instrument has a distinct job.

ONE BUILDING ACT

Authority · institutions · powers · duties

ONE SET OF REGULATIONS

Operational rules

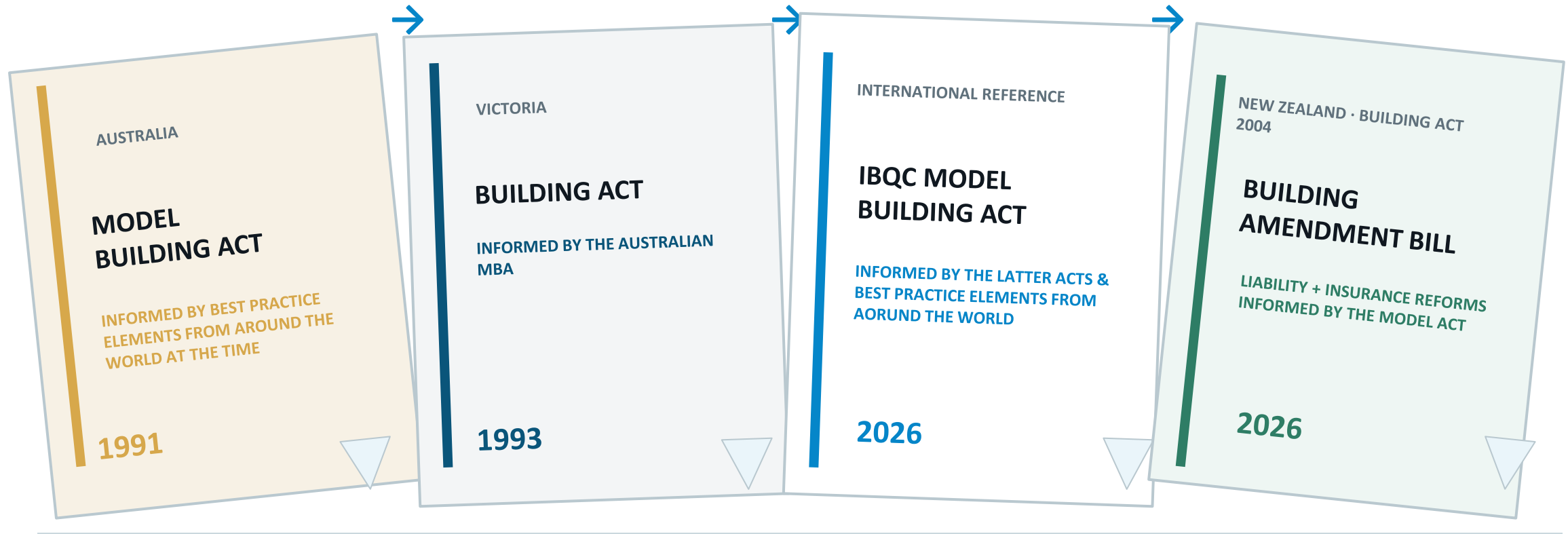
ONE BUILDING CODE

Technical Requirements

Industry should not need a cartographer to find its law.

A 35-year reform arc

From Australian model law to international model law and into New Zealand liability and insurance reform.



Eleven elements. One regulatory ecology.

The model works because the parts work together.

SET THE SYSTEM

- 01 Central regulator
- 02 Act, Regulations + Code
- 03 Safe building products
- 04 Independent permits

CONTROL THE RISK

- 05 Risk-based inspections
- 06 Joint final inspection
- 07 Maintenance + digital memory
- 08 Registered practitioners

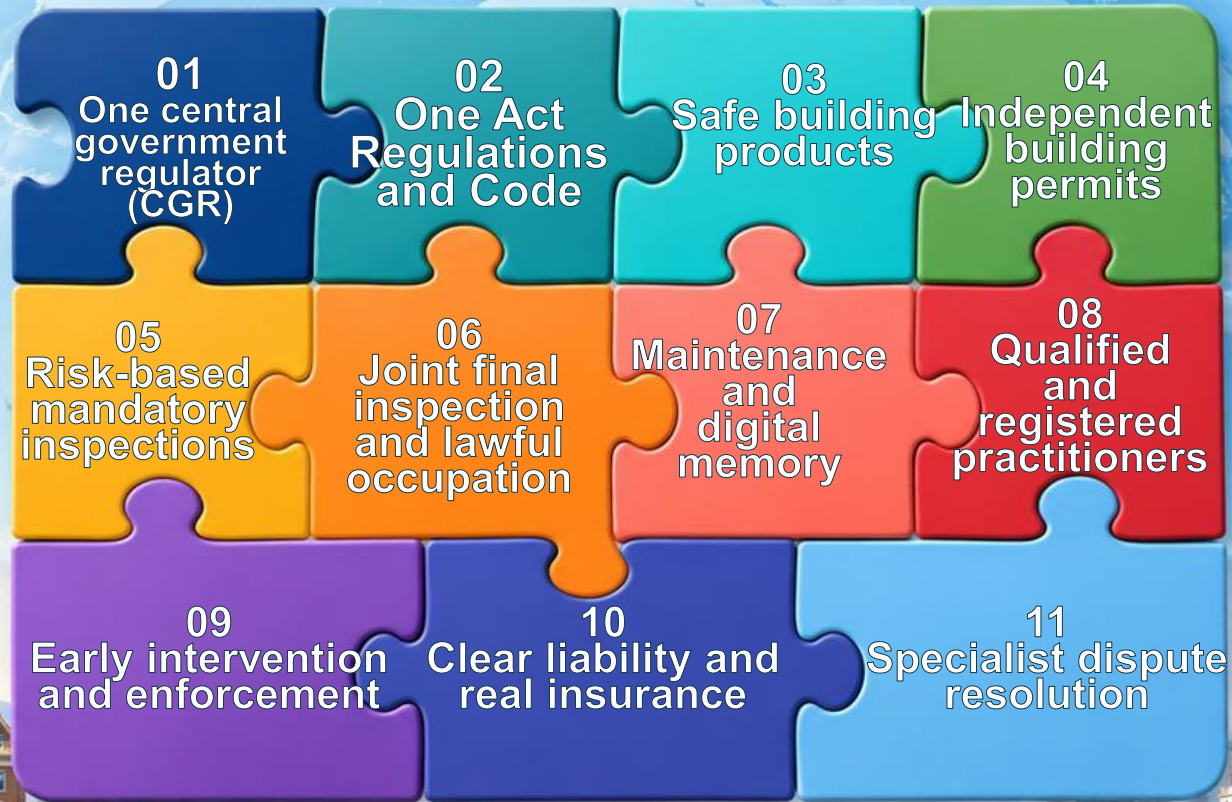
MAKE IT ACCOUNTABLE

- 09 Early enforcement
- 10 Liability + insurance
- 11 Specialist dispute resolution

When responsibility is everywhere, accountability is nowhere.

IBQC MODEL BUILDING ACT: THE COMPLETE PICTURE

Eleven essential elements integrated into one regulatory ecology



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Panel Q&A

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Thank you