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Electrical contractor heavyweight joins chorus of industry concerns

Peak bodies representing thousands of businesses across Australia are apprehensive about a government proposal that may cause serious damage to the lighting sector.

The National Electrical and Communications Association (NECA), which represents 5,200-member organisations that in turn employ 125,000 Australians, has joined a growing group of industry bodies concerned about the new draft National Construction Code. The other bodies include Lighting Council Australia, the Illuminating Engineering Society and the International Association of Lighting Designers (Australia New Zealand).

The changes relate to significant reductions in allowances for architectural and decorative lighting.

“While energy efficiency is an important objective in the development of policy, we worry that the government has not sufficiently and comprehensively consulted with industry on these changes”, says NECA CEO Suresh Manickam in reference to the proposed draft of the National Construction Code.

The new regulations are slated to take effect from July 2019 and will apply to all commercial buildings across Australia, both newly built and redeveloped, that require development approval.

The concerns of NECA are shared by the peak bodies representing manufacturers, suppliers, designers and engineers in the lighting market.

Lighting Council Australia, which represents 100 Australian manufacturers and suppliers of lighting equipment, suggests that it is not a question of whether jobs will be lost, but of how many.

“Our industry provides about 5,000 manufacturing jobs. There are a further 1,000 lighting designers and engineers in the sector”, explains Lighting Council Australia’s David Crossley.

“This proposal has not been properly evaluated and the consultation process was inadequate.”

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