



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA (Chair), Mr Michael Pettersson MLA (Deputy Chair),
Ms Suzanne Orr MLA, Mr Mark Parton MLA

Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into Building Quality in the ACT

Submission Number: 96

Date Authorised for Publication: 5 December 2018

To the Committee Secretary, Standing Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

A brief summary of issues with a residential building project.

Client [REDACTED]

Architect & Builder: Supplied on request.

Project: Knock-down and rebuild; small solar-passive house; precast concrete

Brief: 48kl under-house rain water tank with abutting cellar to supply all water to the house.

Issues pre-building:

1. No plumbing plan and refusal to meet and discuss plumbing with plumber.
2. ACT Residential Building Contract with inadequate definitions of mile stones for Progress Payment Schedule.
3. A Geotechnical report based on the assessment of an engineer walking around the house at night with the light from his i-phone.
4. Architect was uninformed about the data-line requirements of a solar panel array and on best practice plumbing for a rain water tank supplying all water to the house, including drinking water.

Issues during building:

1. Complete neglect of environmental issues, including back-garden used to dump excavate and building rubble.
2. Lack of progress information; requests for progress payments before opportunities to inspect progress; increasing frequency of EOTs justified with weather and other hold-ups 3-4 months previously.
3. Sewerage to go to tie, without informing clients of the requirement to reline old pipes; all pipes not adequately bedded; leaf-beaters not installed to specifications; no first flush diverters installed; rain water tank not lined.
4. Precast concrete walls with window-openings not to specifications and with significant deviations from 90deg angles; one wall significantly damaged during installation and inadequately patched.
5. Misaligned footings for house and pergola.
6. Installation of inadequately stored, dis-coloured steel posts.
7. Water egress at entrance inadequately fixed.

8. Clients were blamed and charged for everything that went wrong with this project.

Issues after completion:

1. Water hammer due to faulty rain2main switch.
2. Cracks in slab on ground, including in wet areas; internal concrete walls finished with wrong tung oil.
3. 70 item defect list incompletely addressed weeks past the legal time frame.
4. Rain water labelled external tap not connected to rain water tank.
5. Water egress in cellar, 1.5 years after completion requiring emptying rain water tank during drought and fitting it with a liner.

Systemic issues:

1. Inadequate building certifications (e.g. check of appropriate bedding of storm-water and sewerage pipes);
2. Government inspectors under-skilled;
3. It is very difficult for clients to find out who can inspect and certify what and what the legal responsibilities are with respect to shoddy work;
4. This architect and builder cuts corners where-ever he can and simply relies on wearing clients down to the point where they give up.

Details supplied on request.