



## Australian Institute of Architects

13 July 2016

David McHugh  
Chief Executive  
NT Department of Infrastructure  
PO Box 61  
PALMERSTON NT 0801

Dear David

**Re: Post construction audits (ref. 2016/0437)**

The Australian Institute of Architects (NT Chapter) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Department's proposed post-construction audits.

We support the Department's initiative and would encourage this sort of evaluation for all projects managed by the Department of Infrastructure. Indeed a post occupancy evaluation (POE) should be included in the scope of works for all DOI consultancy tenders, RFPs and RFQs.

POEs, when properly implemented, have proven to be an effective means of evaluating the success, shortcomings or indeed failures of buildings, their environmental performance, their social engagement and their contextual response.

A meaningful post occupancy evaluation takes time to develop and comes at a cost. Unfortunately, these are often the reasons they are not conducted, and their potential lessons are therefore lost. We believe that the upfront time and cost of a POE pays its dividends on subsequent projects, offering more sound technical responses and a better fit between design and occupant aspiration.

The timing of a POE is important in capturing as much information as possible, and we would suggest that this may extend beyond the defects liability period. The building's technical performance, for example, is one aspect that needs to be monitored across seasonal variations. In addition, design responses and their fit with the building's occupants is also important, and is something that is best understood after the occupants have taken up residence for at least a year. This again, may extend beyond the defects period.

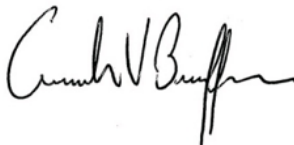
Any review of design responsiveness, for example, to spatial relationships, functionality, or site constraints, must be done in reference to the developed project brief. This will provide an opportunity to interrogate both the thoroughness of the client brief and the adequacy of the design.

We would also suggest that audits might be done on the flow of information during construction. This may help capture deleterious product substitutions by contractors, as well as compromises in design intent that may have resulted from a lack of understanding by construction administrators unfamiliar with early project decisions.

For a POE to be effective, its findings must be available to not only the immediate consultant team, but also to other designers working on a range of building typologies (e.g. health, education, housing). The Department might consider publishing these reports in an accessible way so as to inform future work by other consultants, maximising the lessons learned.

We strongly support post occupancy evaluations as an integral and fundamental aspect of building delivery, and encourage the Department to include this in the scope of work for all consultancies on all major projects.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Broffman', written in a cursive style.

Andrew Broffman RAIA

NT Chapter President  
Australian Institute of Architects