

RB14-021

CLASSIFICATION OF VOCATIONAL AND OTHER SPECIALIZED SCHOOLS

Reference: Alberta Building Code 2014 Div B, 3.1.2.1.(1) and Table 3.1.17.1.

Div B, 3.1.2.1.(1) “Except as permitted by Articles 3.1.2.3. to 3.1.2.5., every *building* or part thereof shall be classified according to its *major occupancy* as belonging to one of the Groups or Divisions described in Table 3.1.2.1. (See Appendix A.)”

Table 3.1.17.1. “Occupant Load” Personal services shops occupant load =4.6m²/person.

Question:

The above Code references classify schools and colleges (non-residential) as Group A, Division 2 occupancies. It has been queried whether vocational and other specialized schools with a limited occupant load can be classified as Group D (office/personal services) occupancies to take advantage of the less restrictive requirements for such occupancies.

Commentary I Relevant Facts:

The Group A, Division 2 occupancy classification in the Code is based on the high occupant load which is typically present in elementary and secondary schools. It is not reasonable to classify vocational and other specialized schools with a low occupant load as Group A, Division 2.

For example, a computer school with individual work stations for students will create no more hazard than a typical word processing or computer division in an office situation. Therefore, there is no reason why such an occupancy should not be classified as a Group D. However, a limitation should be made to ensure that very large vocational schools or other specialized schools do not get classified as Group D, because of their higher occupant loads and travel distances.

Conclusion:

Vocational and other specialized schools with an area not exceeding 150 m² and a travel distance to the nearest egress door not exceeding 15 metres may be classified as Group D Occupancies. Occupant load calculations for such spaces shall be based on 4.6 m²/person for school shops and vocational rooms (Table 3.1.17.1.)

Chief Building Inspector

Regulation Bulletin General Policy Statement

Unless stated otherwise, the Code references in this Regulations Bulletin are to Division B of the Alberta Building Code 2014 (ABC 2014). Regulation Bulletins do not overrule the ABC 2014 nor constitute a relaxation of the Code. They serve to clarify the Code in areas where the latter is ambiguous or does not cover a specific topic. Regulation Bulletins are City of Calgary clarifications for staff use to enable consistency in the application of the Code. Regulation Bulletins should always be read in the context of the appropriate requirements of the Code