

# BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing  
**AIBC, APEGBC, BOABC, POABC**

**File No: 06-0077**

**INTERPRETATION**

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Interpretation Date:	June 21, 2011
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2006
Subject:	Unprotected opening near exterior exit stairs
Keywords:	Exit, stairs, unprotected openings
Building Code Reference(s):	9.9.4.1.; 9.9.4.2.(5); 9.9.4.4.; 9.9.4.5.(1)(b)

**Question:**

Article 9.9.4.4. states that "Where an unenclosed exterior exit stair or ramp provides the only means of egress from suite". If a building contains multiple residential suites served with two means of egress (as per the attached drawing), should the openings in exterior walls and within 3 m horizontally and less than 10 m below or less than 5 m above be protected with wired glass in fixed steel frames or glass block?

**Interpretation:**

Yes.

The question and the attached explanatory diagram make it clear that this is a multiple residential apartment building served by two exits. Each exit is composed of an exterior exit walkway served by a single exit stair. Such exits do not comply with Sentence 9.9.4.2.(5) as an exterior exit passageway because each passageway does not have an exit stair at each end. Each of these exit systems must be protected from the rest of the building with fire separations and exposure protection from the openings that are within distances stated by Clause 9.9.4.5.(1)(b).

This interpretation is consistent with BC Appeal Board #1687 and decision #1691 that deal with similar Part 3 case.



R. J. Light, Committee Chair

The views expressed are the consensus of the joint committee with members representing AIBC, APEGBC, BOABC, and POABC, which form the BC Building Code Interpretation Committee. The purpose of the committee is to encourage uniform province wide interpretation of the BC Building Code. These views should not be considered as the official interpretation of legislated requirements based on the BC Building Code, as final responsibility for an interpretation rests with the local *Authority Having Jurisdiction*. The views of the joint committee should not be construed as legal advice.

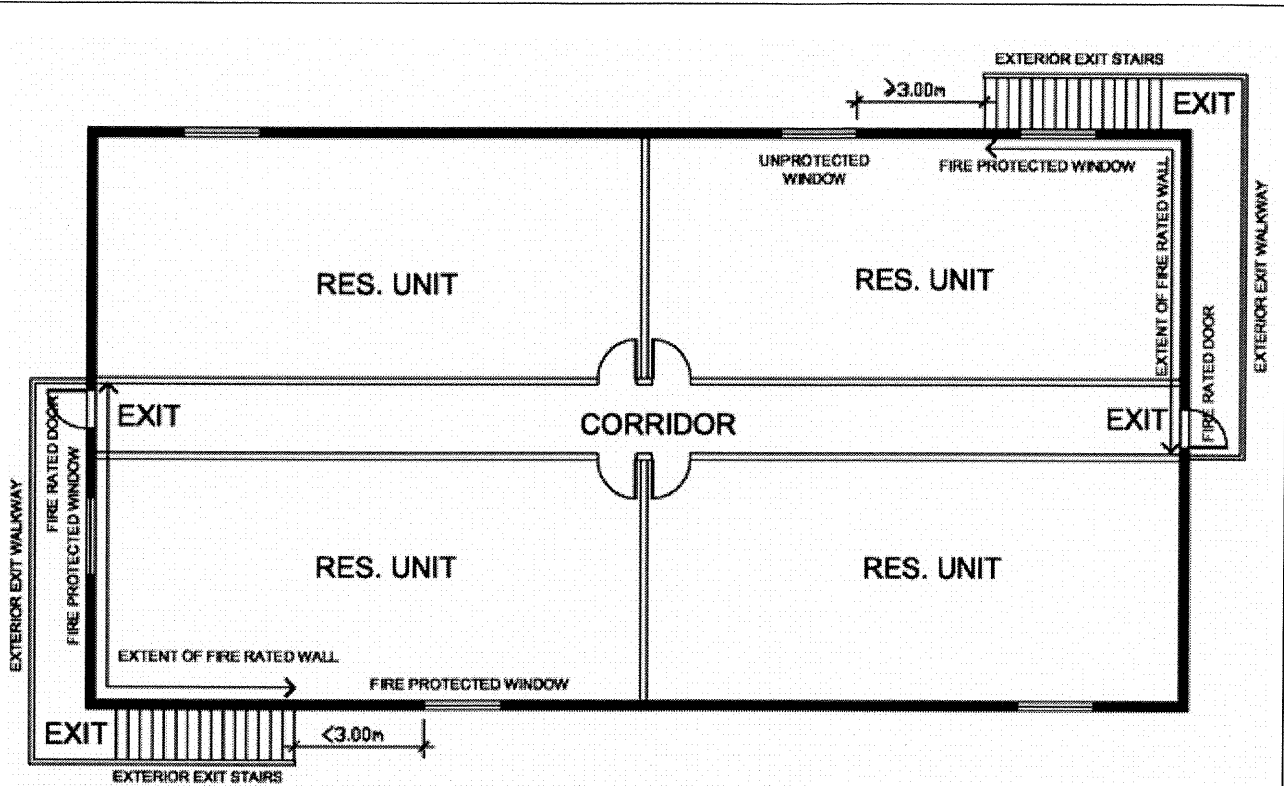
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