

**BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE**  
**AIBC, APEGBC, BOABC, POABC**

**File No: 98-0147**

**INTERPRETATION**

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Interpretation Date: June 20, 2006

Building Code Edition: BC Building Code 1998

Subject: Minimum window areas for bedrooms

Keywords: sleeping rooms, windows, glass area

Building Code Reference(s): 3.7.2.1., 9.7.1.2.

**Question:**

In a Part 3 apartment building that is sprinklered, can a suite contain a bedroom, that has no exterior windows or doors, meet the requirement of the code for minimum window areas by providing only interior (glazing) windows in interior walls?

**Interpretation:**

No.

Sentence 3.7.2.1.(1) requires every sleeping room and every principal room in a dwelling unit be provided with windows having areas conforming to Subsection 9.7.1. The Appendix A-3.7.2.1. indicates that Part 9 requirements for windows cover a number of subjects, however, Article 3.7.2.1. refers only to the area limits.

The User's Guide of NBC 1995 for Part 3 states that although the requirements for windows in Section 3.7 are intended to provide a reasonable quantity of daylight into rooms in dwelling units, these windows may also provide natural ventilation, venting of a fire in the dwelling unit, and access to the dwelling unit from the exterior for fire fighters if the window is within reach of ladders.

It is interpreted that the minimum window area required by Sentence 3.7.2.1.(1) applies to exterior windows, therefore, windows located in an interior wall would not meet the code requirement for minimum window areas.

There may be other means to meet the intent of Sentence 3.7.2.1.(1) by way of an equivalent acceptable to the Authority Having Jurisdiction.

Please note that the requirement that windows be provided in certain rooms in dwelling units has been eliminated in the NBC 2005, however, most bedrooms in Part 9 buildings would still be required to have windows for purposes of ventilation or emergency egress.

  
R. J. Light, Committee Chair

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