

# BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing  
**AIBC, EGBC, BOABC**

**File No: 18-0098**

**INTERPRETATION**

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Interpretation Date:	February 16, 2021
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2018
Subject:	Mezzanine area, stair opening, layout of open horizontal plane, visual access
Keywords:	Mezzanine, area, stair opening, open horizontal plane layout, visual access
Building Code Reference(s):	3.2.1.1.(3)

## Question:

1. In calculating the area of a mezzanine, should the opening for the stairs serving the mezzanine be excluded?
2. Are there any restrictions in the layout of the required open horizontal plane adjoining a mezzanine. For example, with an L shaped open horizontal plane layout, some parts of the open horizontal plane may not be visually open to view from the mezzanine.

## Interpretation:

1. Yes.

Clause 3.2.1.1.(3)(a) requires that not less than 60% of the horizontal plane separating the mezzanine from the room or floor space in which it is located is open. The opening for the stairs leading up the mezzanine should be included in this 60% open area.

In other words, the area of the stair opening is excluded from the 40% of the horizontal plane permitted for the mezzanine area, subject to the restrictions on visual obstructions in Clause 3.2.1.1.(3)(b) and Sentence 3.2.1.1.(7).

2. No.

Clause 3.2.1.1.(3)(a) requires that not less than 60% of the horizontal plane separating the mezzanine from the room or floor space in which it is located is open. There are no prescribed requirements for the layout of the horizontal plane. There are however performance expectations for the open horizontal plane. The Notes to Part 3, A-3.2.1.1.(3) indicates: "The space on the floor beyond the mezzanine, i.e. below the open portion of the horizontal plane, should, with discretion, be visually open to view from the mezzanine."



Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair

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