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| <p align="center"><b>The Industry Association of Building and Property Inspectors in<br/>WA Inc – Inspect WA</b></p>              |  |  |
| <p align="center"><b>Position Paper 6.2019</b></p> <p align="center"><b>Title: Sagging Ceilings in Residential Properties</b></p> |  |  |
| Subject   | Sagging Ceilings in Residential Properties – Impact on the structural integrity of a residential property when inspected and reported on within the context of a Pre Purchase Building Inspection conducted within the terms of AS 4349.1-2007.  |  |
| Association Position  | Sagging Ceilings in a Residential Property are not considered to be a structural defect within the terms of a structural defect and within the context of a Pre-Purchase Building Inspection when conducted within the terms of AS 4349.1-2007 and as such within the ordinary course of pre purchase building inspections should not be reported as such. |  |
| Date Preparation Commenced  | November 2019  |  |
| Date Provisional Approval by Committee for Release to Members for Comment   | November 2019  |  |
| Final Approval by Committee and Release to Members  | November 2019  |  |
| Why was the Paper Released  | Sagging ceilings in residential properties were being reported on occasions by some Building Inspectors as a Major Structural defect in pre purchase building inspection reports which were being prepared in accordance with AS 4349.1  |  |
| Key Definitions   |  |  |
| Ceilings  | Plasterglass, plaster board cladding or any other type of ceiling lining of a residential property.  |  |
| Sagging   | Any notable distortion of the ceiling cladding including signs of fixings “popping” where the ceiling cladding has separated from the ceiling joist.<br>Sagging does not apply to a ceiling which is sagging as a result of a sag or deflection of the ceiling support joist.  |  |
| Major Defect<br>AS 4391.1   | A defect of sufficient magnitude where rectification has to be carried out in order to avoid unsafe conditions, loss of utility or further deterioration of the property.  |  |
| Structural element<br>AS 4349.1   | Physically distinguishable part of a structure.<br>NOTE: For example wall, columns, beam, connection   |  |
| Structural defect<br>AS 4349.1  | Fault or deviation from the intended structural performance of a building element.   |  |
| Safety Hazard<br>AS 4349.1  | The report shall identify any observed item that may constitute a present or imminent serious safety hazard  |  |

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| Structural Defect as defined by REIWA Australian Standard pre-purchase structural inspection condition | "Structural Defects" means a fault or deviation from the intended structural performance of a building element and is a major defect to the building structure of sufficient magnitude where rectification has to be carried out in order to avoid unsafe conditions, loss of utility, or further deterioration of the building structure. Structural defects do not include any non-structural element, e.g., roof plumbing and roof covering, general gas, water and sanitary plumbing, electrical wiring, partition walls, cabinetry, windows, doors, trims, fencing, minor structures, non-structural damp issues, <u>ceiling linings</u> , floor coverings, decorative finishes such as plastering, painting, tiling etc., general maintenance, or spalling of masonry, fretting or mortar rusting. |
| Scope of Inspection<br>AS 4349.1 Appendix A Pre Purchase Structural Inspection                         | <p>A3 SCOPE OF INSPECTION</p> <p>The inspection shall comprise visual assessment of accessible areas of the property to identify major defects to the building structure and to form an opinion regarding the general condition of the structure of the property</p> <p>NOTE: The structural report should not contain any assessment or an opinion regarding the following:</p> <p>(a) <b>Any non-structural element</b>, e.g., roof plumbing and roof covering, general gas, water and sanitary plumbing, electrical wiring, partition walls, cabinetry, windows, doors, trims, fencing, minor structures, non-structural damp issues, <u>ceiling linings</u>, floor coverings, decorative finishes such as plastering, painting, tiling, etc.</p>   |
| Key Conclusions  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sagging ceilings, being claddings, are <b>not</b> a Major Structural defect in accordance with AS4349.1 Appendix A. Ceilings irrespective of the condition are not structural elements</li> <li>2. Ceilings do not impact on the structural integrity of the property.</li> <li>3. Sagging Ceilings should not be reported as a structural defect.</li> <li>4. See additional observations</li> </ol>  |
| Additional Observations  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Extensive sagging of a ceiling can and should be reported by the Building Inspector as a <b>Major Non Structural Defect</b> if he is of the opinion that the sagging satisfies the requirements of a Major Defect as defined by AS 4349.1</li> <li>2. Extensive sagging of a ceiling can and should be reported by the Building Inspector as a <b>Safety Hazard</b> if he is of the opinion that the sagging satisfies the requirements of a Safety Hazard as defined by AS 4349.1</li> </ol>  |

Signed Chairman

The Industry Association of Building and Property Inspectors in WA – Inspect WA

# 1. Public Release Template



## Public Release – Position Paper 6.2019 – November 2019

**The Industry Association of Building and Property Inspectors in WA Inc – Inspect WA is pleased to announce the release of its Position Paper on Residential Ceiling Defects**

### **Background**

The following key issue that contributed to the release of this Position Paper:

1. That sagging ceilings in residential properties were being reported on occasions by some Building Inspectors as a Major Structural defect in pre purchase building inspection reports which were being prepared in accordance with AS 4349.1

### **The Associations position is:**

1. Sagging ceilings, being claddings, are not a Major Structural defect in accordance with AS4349.1 Appendix A. Ceilings irrespective of the condition are not structural elements
2. Ceilings do not impact on the structural integrity of the property.
3. Sagging Ceilings should not be reported as a major structural defect.
4. Extensive sagging of a ceiling can and should be reported by the Building Inspector as a Major Non Structural Defect if he is of the opinion that the sagging satisfies the requirements of a Major Defect as defined by AS 4349.1
5. Extensive sagging of a ceiling can and should be reported by the Building Inspector as a Safety Hazard if he is of the opinion that the sagging satisfies the requirements of a Safety Hazard as defined by AS 4349.1

The Association recommends that its Building Inspector Members do not report sagging ceilings as a Structural Defect when producing a report in accordance with AS 4349.1

Committee  
Inspect WA  
November 2019