



Ruling

Minimum Requirements for Climate Active Certification

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4 Parramatta Square

12 Darcy Street

Parramatta NSW 2150

PO Box A290

Sydney South NSW 2000

T: (02) 9995 5000 (switchboard)

T: 131 555 (environment information and publications requests)

TTY: 133 677 then ask for 131 555

Speak and Listen users: 1300 555 727 then ask for 131 555

Email: nabers@environment.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.nabers.gov.au

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1 Introduction

1.1 General

This document is a **Ruling** providing the minimum NABERS energy requirements for Climate Active carbon neutral certification using the NABERS pathway.

This **Ruling** will supersede the minimum NABERS energy requirements outlined in the following elements of the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources, *Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard for Buildings*:

- a) Section 2.4: *REDUCE: Develop and implement an emissions reduction strategy.*
- b) Box 6: *For buildings seeking carbon neutral certification through NABERS Energy or Green Star — Performance.*

1.2 Interpretation of the Rules and Rulings

This **Ruling** is to be read in conjunction with the respective NABERS **Rules** as they apply to the specific building type.

Where a conflict between this **Ruling** and existing **Rules** is present, the requirements of the **Ruling** take precedence over this **Rules**.

This **Ruling** applies to any building eligible for Climate Active carbon neutral certification using the NABERS pathway.

1.3 Situations not covered by the Rules

Assessors must comply with the **Ruling** unless prior approval has been sought and approved by the **National Administrator**.

Where appropriate, **Assessors** may contact the **National Administrator** to propose an alternative methodology, outlining the circumstances and rationale. Prior approval for use is required and may be granted conditionally, on a case-by-case basis and at the **National Administrator's** discretion.

1.4 How to use this document

The term "**Ruling**" refers to a body of works produced by NABERS that specify what must be examined, tested and documented when an **Assessor** conducts a rating. Wherever the term is used in this document from Chapter 3 onwards, it refers to this document, *NABERS Ruling — Minimum Requirements for Climate Active Certification*. Other **Rules** documents mentioned in the text are distinguished from the present document by the inclusion of their title.

Text appearing **dark green** and **bold** is a defined term. Defined terms can be found in Chapter 2 of this **Ruling** or in the terms and definitions chapter of the respective **Rules** document.

The following formatting conventions may appear in this text:

 Important requirements and/or instructions are highlighted by an information callout box.

Note: Text appearing with a grey background is explanatory text only and is not to be read as part of the **Ruling**.

Example: Text appearing with a green background is intended to demonstrate a worked example of the respective **Rules** section or **Ruling** section.

1.5 Related documents

The following document have been referenced within this **Ruling**:

Commonwealth of Australia, [Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources, Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard for Buildings, July 2020](#)

2 Terms and definitions

This chapter lists the key terms and their definitions that are integral to the proper use of this document.

Term	Definition
Assessor(s)	An accredited person authorised by the National Administrator to conduct NABERS ratings.
minimum energy efficiency requirement	A minimum NABERS energy rating needed to be eligible for Climate Active carbon neutral certification using the NABERS pathway.
National Administrator	<p>The body responsible for administering NABERS, in particular the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Establishing and maintaining the standards and procedures to be followed in all aspects of the operation of the system.b) Determining issues that arise during the operation of the system and the making of ratings.c) Accrediting Assessors and awarding accredited ratings in accordance with NABERS standards and procedures. <p>The functions of the National Administrator are undertaken by the NSW Government through the Department of Planning and Environment.</p>
Public Disclosure Statement	A report published on the Climate Active website communicating progress on emissions reductions activities and offsetting as part of a carbon neutral claim.
Rules	Authoritative document produced by the National Administrator that specifies what must be covered by an Assessor in order to produce a rating.
Ruling(s)	An authoritative decision by the National Administrator which acts as an addition or amendment to the Rules .

3 Minimum energy efficiency requirements

3.1 General

In accordance with the *Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard for Buildings*, buildings obtaining carbon neutral certification using NABERS must meet a **minimum energy efficiency requirement**. This is to ensure that energy efficiency is used as the primary strategy for reduction of emissions, in accordance with the *Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard for Buildings*.

3.2 Minimum energy requirements

3.2.1 Minimum NABERS Energy rating requirement

To obtain Climate Active carbon neutral certification using the NABERS pathway, a building must achieve a minimum NABERS energy (without GreenPower™) rating as follows:

- a) *Offices and shopping centres*: minimum 4-star NABERS energy rating.
- b) *All other building types*: minimum 3-star NABERS energy rating.

3.2.2 Commitment to achieve minimum NABERS star rating requirement

Where the minimum NABERS energy rating requirements outlined in Section 3.2.1 cannot be met, a commitment to achieve the requirements can be made to the NABERS **National Administrator** at the time of submitting the carbon neutral certification. This will allow buildings working towards their rating requirement to achieve carbon neutral certification.

The **minimum energy efficiency requirement** must be achieved within three (3) years from the start of the carbon neutral certification.

Note: The commitment to achieve the specified requirements cannot be extended.

If the commitment is not met at the end of the three (3) years, the carbon neutral status of the building will no longer be certified.

3.2.3 When the minimum requirement is not achieved, and a commitment cannot be made

Where the minimum NABERS energy rating is not achieved, and a commitment cannot be made, the alternative is to disclose the following information in the **Public Disclosure Statement**:

- a) Why the minimum NABERS energy rating cannot be achieved.
- b) Why a commitment cannot be made to achieve the rating within three (3) years.

- c) What the building’s emissions reduction strategy is in accordance with Section 2.4 of the *Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard for Buildings*.

In addition, renewable electricity must be purchased to bring the carbon emissions intensity (kgCO₂e/sqm) of the rated energy to the equivalent of the minimum NABERS energy rating requirement. The required renewable electricity purchase can be calculated using the [NABERS “Estimate your rating”](#) calculator.

⚠ Assessors must seek approval from the NABERS **National Administrator** to use this method prior to lodging the rating. The **Assessor** must justify why the minimum star rating could not be achieved.

Example: An office building has a 3-star NABERS energy rating and cannot commit to obtaining the minimum energy rating requirements (i.e. 4-star) in the next three (3) years.

In addition to the information that needs to be included in the **Public Disclosure Statement**, the building owner must purchase renewable electricity to bring the carbon emissions intensity of the building to the equivalent of a 4-star rated building. The **Assessor** must calculate how much renewable electricity needs to be purchased.

The building details and energy consumption are as follows:

Rating type	Office base building
Postcode	2000
Hours	50
Area (m ²)	2,400
Electricity (kWh)	340,000
Gas (MJ)	300,000
Diesel (L)	150

The **Assessor** uses the [NABERS “Estimate your rating”](#) tool to determine how much the current electricity consumption must be decreased by for the building to reach 4 stars. This is achieved by gradually reducing the electricity value in the calculator until the building reaches 4 stars.

This example shows that for the building to obtain a 4-star rating it must consume 260,000 kWh of electricity instead of the current 340,000 kWh. Therefore, the building owner needs to match 80,000 kWh of consumption with renewable electricity.

3.2.4 Climate Active carbon neutral certification for a building that wouldn’t usually obtain a NABERS rating

There may be buildings that are unable to obtain a NABERS rating but may still wish to obtain Climate Active carbon neutral certification.

Please contact the **National Administrator** if a building is in a sector where NABERS ratings are available, but one of the following situations occurs:

- a) The building is deemed as unrateable by NABERS and/or the Commercial Building Disclosure Program (www.cbd.gov.au).
- b) The building wouldn't normally obtain a NABERS rating.

In a limited number of situations there may be an alternative pathway available to obtaining certification.

Contact us

**NABERS is administered by the
New South Wales Government**

4 Parramatta Square
12 Darcy Street
Parramatta NSW 2150

T (02) 9995 5000

E nabers@environment.nsw.gov.au

W nabers.gov.au