

**BUILD AID**

**WHAT IS**  
**PRACTICAL**  
**COMPLETION**

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**AfriSam**  
*Creating Concrete Possibilities*

# HEART. SOUL. QUALITY CEMENT.

WHAT GOES INTO IT MATTERS.



## ASK FOR AFRISAM

AfriSam's range of superior quality cement products is specifically designed to meet all your building and construction needs. With each of our products made fit for purpose, they deliver enhanced performance and durability to ensure the highest quality output. Our unparalleled technical support will provide peace of mind to ensure that you can build your reputation on ours. Don't compromise, choose the best cement for your project. **Ask for AfriSam.**

## WHAT IS PRACTICAL COMPLETION

Completing the final finishing items to a building can be a lengthy and involved process, with small items of work still needing to be finished off, minor defects requiring rectification, and the installation of final fittings.

It is also not uncommon that the owner or client take occupation before this work or process is completed and allow the 'finishing off' to proceed after occupation, provided it doesn't inconvenience the owner or client too much and provided that an occupation certificate has been approved and issued by the local authority.

The stage at which the works is sufficiently completed to make occupation possible and so determine that the building is usable or fit for purpose while the contractor 'finishes off' is termed substantial or practical completion.

Practical completion is a very significant milestone in the progress of the building contract. Besides the practical issues, practical completion is the date on which:

- The contractor's liability to pay penalties for late or non-completion ceases.
- Responsibility for the building passes from the contractor to the employer/owner, including all insurances.
- Retention becomes payable to the contractor by the employer in cases where retention has been held.

### The process

The building contractor is required to notify the owner or client in advance of the date on which he or she considers that the works will have reached practical completion to enable the owner or client to make and complete an inspection of the works on or before that date.

It is however important that the building contractor inspect the works beforehand to satisfy himself or herself that the standard of work and the completion thereof is in accordance with what was specified and expected. In the case where the client or his agent considers the works as not practically complete, he or she must issue the contractor with snag list, outlining any incomplete and defective work that requires attention, in order to become practically complete.

This procedure will then be repeated until such time the client or agent is satisfied that the works are practically complete and is prepared to issue a certificate of practical completion and a works completion list.

The employer's right to take occupation of the building on practical completion is, however, subject to the issuing of a certificate of occupancy.

### Certificate of occupancy

A certificate of occupancy is issued in terms of s14 of the National Building Regulations and Building Standard Act 103 of 1977 as amended. In terms of this provision, the local authority is required to issue such certificate within 14 days of being requested to do so by the owner of the building or any person having interest therein. The certificate is issued by the local authority indicating that the building is in compliance with locally adopted building codes and standards and local by-laws as determined when the drawing where approved and that the building is in a suitable condition to be occupied.



**Note:** For more information – See info Guide - What is an occupation certificate and what does it mean

### Works completion

Works completion may be defined or considered to be the state of the works where the work is complete in all respects and there are no apparent defects. This process follows practical completion in that the contractor now considers that the work specified on the works completion list has actually been completed.

The process is the same as practical completion in the sense that the employer or agent would inspect the works, provided the work on the works completion list has been completed and issue a works completion certificate. If not this procedure will be repeated until such time the employer or agent is satisfied that everything on the works completion list has been completed and is prepared to issue a certificate of works completion.

**Note:** We use the term certificate (which can be defined as a record or document) as some building contracts provide for this and have actual forms available that only require completion when needed. Where no certificates are available this process can be successfully undertaken using one's own documentation.

Works completion also signifies the beginning of the Defects Liability Period.



**Note:** For more information on snagging and defects liability – See info Guide - What is Snagging.