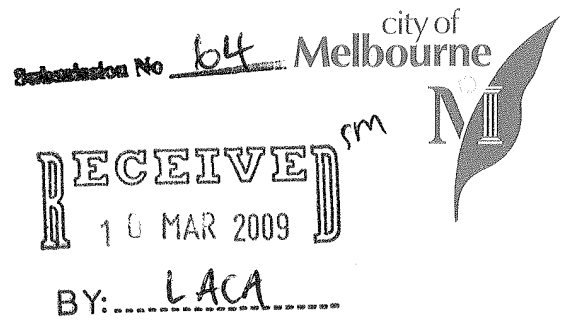


4 March 2009

Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on
Legal and Constitutional Affairs
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Committee Secretary

Draft Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2009

I write to thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback in relation to the Draft Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards.

Members of our Disability Advisory Committee, consisting of twelve community members with personal and/or professional experience, have provided valuable input to this response drawing on their first hand experience of barriers in the built environment and the consequential social exclusion.

After consideration of the draft we wish to submit the following:

1. Certification by building surveyors must ensure compliance and reference to the applicable access standards;
2. Accessway requirements must stipulate compliance requirements for the 90th percentile of wheelchair sizes and users;
3. Class 2 buildings (apartments) must be included in the access requirements for communal areas and accessways; and
4. Emergency warning systems must also include visual alerts for people with vision and hearing impairments.

Furthermore, the importance on wayfinding requirements that ensure equity of access for community members with vision impairments is strongly supported and must be introduced as a first iteration of the Premises Standards.

I wish to commend your Committee for undertaking this important legislative development. The reduction of access barriers in our built environment will assist in ensuring equity of access and participation opportunities for all citizens.

Yours sincerely

Linda Weatherson
Director Community & Culture

Telephone 03 9658 9106
Facsimile 03 9658 9070

CoM reference DM 5071348