



Organisations to Comment on Public Building Access for People with Disabilities Public hearing in Brisbane on 3 April 2009

The House Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee will hear from the Society of Fire Safety as well as other community organisations and stakeholders at a public hearing in Brisbane on Friday. The hearing is the sixth held by the Committee as part of its inquiry into disabled access to public buildings.

The safe evacuation of people with disability from a building in an emergency has been a reoccurring issue through out the Committee's Inquiry. This is particularly important in multi-storey high rise buildings.

The submission received from the Society of Fire Safety suggests that if the draft Premises Standards reflected communication expectations of safe egress from buildings for people with disability then the Australian construction industry might be motivated to develop suitable design solutions.

The Society of Fire Safety submit that studies from the United States prompted by the 'the experience of the 1993 World Trade Centre Bombing and the 2001 aerial attack have shown the tradition "do not use the lift in case of fire" approach may need to be changed.'

The Committee Chair, Mr Mark Dreyfus QC MP said, "Emergency evacuation of people with a disability is an important issue. The Committee is looking forward to hearing what options may be available to address the absence of emergency egress provisions in the Standards."

Details of the hearing:

Date: Friday 3 April 2009

Time: 9:00 am – 1:15 pm

Location: Auditorium 1, Department of Primary Industries, 80 Ann Street, Brisbane

Program:

9.00am – 9.45am Welfare Rights Centre Queensland – submission 102

9.45am – 10.30am Cairns Community Legal Centre – submission 93

10.30am – 11.00am Armidale Dumaresq Council – submission 15

11.10am – 11.45am Ms Rita Struthers and Mr Daniel Bedwell – submission 121

11.45am – 12.15pm Society of Fire Safety, Queensland Chapter – submission 6

12.15pm – 12.45pm Spinal Injuries Association – submission 122

12.45pm – 1.15pm Mr Max Murray – submission 39

Full program details available at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/laca>

Members of the public are welcome to attend the public hearing or listen via webcast on the APH website: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>.

Accessibility: Please contact the Committee Secretariat for information about accessibility at public hearings.

For interview:

Contact the Committee Chair, Mr Mark Dreyfus QC, MP on (02) 6277 4305 (Canberra) or in his electorate on (03) 9769 1955. Or Mr Dreyfus' media adviser, Tim Lisle-Williams on 0431 178 280.

For background information, including the full terms of reference, please visit the inquiry website at www.aph.gov.au/laca or contact the Committee Secretariat on ph (02) 6277 2358 or fax (02) 6277 4427.