



Peak Bodies to Appear at Public Hearing for Public Building Accessibility

The House Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee will hear from Deafness Forum of Australia, Housing Industry Association and Master Builders Australia at a public hearing in Canberra on Thursday 19 March 2009. This is the third public hearing for the Committee's inquiry into the draft Premises Standards.

The Committee Chair, Mark Dreyfus QC MP said "Accessibility of public buildings doesn't just mean mobility constraints. The Deafness Forum of Australia make this point in its submission and the Committee is interested in hearing more on this issue."

The Committee will also hear from two peak industry groups: Housing Industry Association and Master Builders Australia.

Master Builders Australia has asked the Committee to look at the Premises Standards holistically to ensure that they are cost effective and do not cause unjustifiable hardship to industry or businesses.

"The Committee is interested to hear about the impacts the Standards might have on any particular sector or group within a sector," the Committee Chair added.

The Housing Industry Association has expressed its support for the Standards as they provide greater certainty for building owners. However, HIA has cautioned that the Standards must be consistent with current building approvals processes and should avoid duplication with building standards.

The Committee has been asked to inquire into the following terms of reference:

- the appropriateness and effectiveness of the proposed Premises Standards in achieving their objects
- the interaction between the Premises Standards and existing regulatory schemes operating in state and territory jurisdictions, including the appropriateness and effectiveness of the proposed Model Process to Administer Building Access for People with Disability, and
- whether the Premises Standards will have an unjustifiable impact on any particular sector or group within a sector.

Details of the hearing:

Date: Thursday 19 March 2009
Time: 8:25 am – 11:00 am
Location: Committee Room 1R3, 1st floor, Parliament House, Canberra
Witnesses: 8.25 am – 9.30 am Housing Industry Association
9.30 am – 10.15 am Deafness Forum of Australia
10.15 am – 11.00 am Master Builders Australia

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.