

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

Output 1.3

Question No. 85

Senator Bernardi asked the following question at the hearing on 23 February 2009:

Regarding the draft Disability Access to Premises Standards, there is a significant difference between the costs and benefits (over 30 years) of the 2004 Regulation Impact Statement and the 2008 Regulation Impact Statement.

- a) What are the main differences between the two that have resulted in such a reduction in the costs?
- b) Do these differences account wholly for the difference in costs? Or what else has contributed to the change in costs, and
- c) what are the reasons for the fall in expected benefits, from \$13bn (over 30 years) to \$11.2bn?

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

- a) The major difference that has resulted in such a reduction of costs is the partial exemptions for small buildings in the new draft standards, which were not included in the 2004 draft. Other changes, particularly exemptions for small swimming pools and short-term holiday accommodation with less than four rooms, as well as excluding Class 2 buildings, have also contributed to the reduction in costs. Further information on this matter is provided in Chapter 10 of the Regulation Impact Statement.
- b) Yes.
- c) The changes in the proposed Standards result in a reduced impact on buildings in comparison to the Standards put out for comment in 2004. These changes were designed so as to minimise any resulting reduction of access and hence retain the essential intended benefit; that is, to provide greater and more dignified access to public buildings for persons with disabilities. The assessment of the benefits was altered due to the change in the requirements proposed in the new draft.