



p: +61 3 9430 5025 f: +61 3 9445 9219 e: [info@adha.net.au](mailto:info@adha.net.au) w: [www.adha.net.au](http://www.adha.net.au)

## Technical Bulletin 01-11

### Industry concerns with the access to premises standards

As there have been some concerns or confusion from within the architectural hardware industry regarding the access to premises standards, the ADHA executive sought a meeting with the ABCB to seek answers. A representative from the ABCB Office travelled from Canberra to Sydney to attend the ADHA executive meeting at Jomon Hardware on November 4th and provided some insight to the questions tabled.

It must be noted that the ABCB is not responsible for administering the NCC (National Construction Code – BCA) however can offer clarification on the intent of provisions. Enforcement of the BCA - NCC is dealt with by State or Territory regulations handled by authorised organisations or people. Specifically, advice provided by the ABCB does not constitute any form of advice or recommendation for a specific building project. The ABCB recommends that you seek project specific advice from a qualified building certifier, local building authority or building administration in your State or Territory. The participating Governments of the ABCB and ADHA shall not be liable to any person or entities who relies upon this advice for any purpose.

**Users should seek appropriate independent professional advice prior to relying on, or entering into any commitment based on material in this technical bulletin.**

The following are industry questions posed at the meeting and the respective answers.

### Questions

**Do I need to have lever furniture with a 35-45mm projection clearance between the back of the lever and the door surface or back plate (if lever length covers the entire back plate)?**

*Yes, if complying with the Deemed-to-Satisfy Provisions, it is mandatory to have this clearance. The reason this is required is to provide enough clearance to allow the handle to be grasped and operated while preventing potential hand or arm entrapment that may result if the gap is too big.*

**What about narrow stile locks and door furniture where most of the lever typically is projecting over glass which is further back from the door face, this will not comply?**

*AS 1428.1 Figure 35(A) – “Example of acceptable door hardware for hinged doors” – acknowledges that the clearance between the handle and the back plate or door face may not be uniform. Clause 13.5.2(b) specifies that the measurement of the clearance is to be taken at ‘the centre grip section of the handle’. However, the extent of the handle that must be within the specified clearance is a grey area and one that perhaps had not been considered when developing the AS1428.1 2009 standard. It could be argued that if the projection is based upon the glass and not the Aluminium frame, entrapment at the frame could occur. If ADHA consider that this matter needs to be clarified in the Australian Standard, a submission to the ABCB would be required to enable this clause to be reviewed.*

ADHA comment - It should be noted that ADHA did not have a representative on the AS1428.1 committee when this standard was being developed.

### **Do D/pull and BTB handles need to have the same projection clearances as levers?**

For sliding doors yes it is mandatory under the Deemed-to-Satisfy Provisions to have this clearance as shown in AS 1428.1 Figure 35(b). This also applies to hinged doors with pull handles as the standard refers to door handles and related hardware and accessories.

### **All lever furniture is required to be a D type lever to provide an adequate grip for people with hand impairments, so where can I use a lever with no return?**

Class 1a and associated Class 10 buildings (houses and their outbuildings) are not required by the BCA to be accessible and therefore do not need to have levers that comply with the above. Class 2 buildings need to comply in common areas but the apartments can utilise levers with or without a return including the apartment entry. All other classes of building require D type levers in use in all areas except those areas where access is specifically not required, e.g. plant rooms or some building entrances where there are multiple entrances.

### **The return to this D type lever, can it be less or greater than the 20mm stated in AS1428.1?**

The lever must have a return of 20mm minimum but it could be greater. Note that the 20 mm return shown in Figure 35(A) of AS 1428.1 is an 'example of acceptable door hardware' only. However, it is best kept close to the 20mm to ensure compliance and avoid any interpretations that may arise from individuals.

### **What angle applies to this D type lever return?**

AS 1428.1 does not specify the angle for the return. The handle shall be such that the hand of a person will not slip from the handle during the operation of the latch.

### **Who could a manufacturer of door furniture approach to get a secondary opinion of compliance before producing goods for sale?**

There are a number of organisations that provide technical appraisals or opinions that can assist with technical advice when it comes to design criteria meeting compliance in use. Also appraisal from a recognised access consultant may assist.

### **All turn snibs where installed require a lever handle which has a minimum length of 45 mm from the centre of the spindle. Where can I use a turn that is not 45mm in length?**

Class 1a and associated Class 10 buildings (houses and their outbuildings) are not required by the BCA to be accessible and therefore do not need to have snibs that comply with the above. Class 2 buildings need to comply in common areas but the apartments can utilise snibs that are less than 45 mm including the apartment entry. All other classes of building require snibs to be 45 mm in all areas except those areas where access is specifically not required, e.g. plant rooms or some building entrances where there are multiple entrances. Note however, that the use of snibs on some doors may not be permitted by the fire safety requirements of the BCA.

### **What if the builder volunteers to build some apartments that are accessible apartments?**

*Apartments that are voluntarily designed to be accessible need not comply with the BCA but it is likely that the design and contract documentation would call for compliance with AS 1428.1.*

### **What clear opening do I need for an apartment that is accessible and one that is not?**

*Only accessible units in a Class 3 building need a doorway with an 850mm clear opening. Non accessible apartments do not need to comply with this clear opening. Generally the building designer would state the opening widths in the door schedule and in doing so should meet compliance.*

**As the building codes and access to premises standards calls for apartments that are used for short term or transient rentals to comply as being accessible, what ruling applies to the hardware when the use was not known at the time of writing the door hardware specification? E.g. a developer sells an apartment off the plan and this is purchased by an investor who uses this as an executive rental apartment for short term stays. Specification writers cannot predict what the future use of an apartment maybe.**

*In recognition that the future use of a Class 2 building is not known at the time of design and construction, the BCA does not differentiate between those used for long term or short term occupancy. The requirement for specified common areas to be accessible applies to all new Class 2 buildings.*

**A door closer with a delayed action function previously was a preferred requirement in accordance with AS1428.1 2001 for doors used by the physically challenged. This comment has now been removed in AS1428.1 2009 but some disability consultants still require or prefer this function.**

*A closer with a delayed action function could be used if desired or preferred however there is no legal requirement to enforce the use of a closer with this function.*

**The standard calls for all self closing doors to have 20N opening force across the entire range of the door opening cycle. Only some closers of size 1 or 2 may comply but these closer strengths may not close doors subject to strong wind pressures?**

*If a door is required to be accessible, the operating forces specified in AS 1428.1 must be met. Where this cannot be achieved due to reasons like the weight of the door or the operation of the door closer, it may be necessary to consider power operation. However, it should be noted that not all building entrance doors need be accessible. Where multiple entrances exist, the principal entrance and a total of 50% of all entrances provided are to be accessible. There are also rules that govern the maximum distance between accessible and inaccessible entrances; consult the BCA for further information. Fire doors and smoke doors are exempt from the 20n requirement.*

### **Do public enclosed toilets need to have a break out function?**

*The BCA requires all fully enclosed sanitary compartments to have doors that either open outwards, slide, or be readily removable from the outside, unless there is a clear space of at least 1.2 m between the closet pan and the doorway. The BCA also contains a diagram to show how the 1.2 m clear space is to be measured.*

**Does AS1428.2 override AS1428.1 as some of the statements made in AS1428.2 are no longer stated in AS1428.1. For example AS1428.2 states “delayed action closers are preferred” where as this statement has been removed from the current version of AS1428.1 2009.**

*In order to comply with the BCA, AS1428.1 is the relevant standard for most buildings. Compliance with specific provisions of AS1428.2 is only required for the passenger use areas of Class 9b or Class 10 buildings used for public transport. These buildings are covered in Part H2 of the BCA.*

**All frameless or fully glazed doors, sidelights and glazing capable of being mistaken for a doorway or opening, must clearly be marked in accordance with AS1428.1 2009. What is the suggestion of how these types of doors should be marked?**

*AS1428.1 contains information on how the door is to be marked. Luminance contrast of the marking over the background does come into effect when choosing how to mark the glass. Consult AS1428.1 for further information.*

**What is the correct method for handing a RH or LH transfer toilet?**

*Clarification of what constitutes a RH and LH transfer toilet is provided in Figure 43 (Circulation space for WC pan - right-hand transfer) of AS 1428.1.2009. If, when seated on the toilet and facing forward the grab rail is on the RHS, the cubicle is set up for a RH transfer. The mirror image is a LH transfer. Signage identifying an accessible facility indicating right or left hand transfer is listed with text clauses along with example drawings in section 8 of AS1428.1.2009.*

**Most states and territories do not accredit access consultants and there is no national qualification for these practitioners. Who has the final lawful power to make a clear indication of compliance or not?**

*Building surveyors or certifiers through State and Territory legislation. Note that the Association of Consultants in Access Australia (ACAA) is currently involved in the development of a Vocational Graduate Diploma of Access Consulting.*

**What if I am unhappy with a decision of compliance made against me by a certifier?**

*There are avenues of appeal in place in each state and territory.*

**When did the Access to premises standards come into effect?**

*On the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2011. Note that the BCA access provisions that were aligned with the Premises Standards also came into effect from 1 May 2011.*

**Does the access to premises apply to just new buildings?**

*The Premises Standards, and the BCA access provisions apply to new buildings and new building work in existing buildings (such as alterations and additions). However, existing buildings that are not subject to the Premises Standards may still be subject to a complaint of discrimination under the Disability Discrimination Act.*



p: +61 3 9430 5025 f: +61 3 9445 9219 e: [info@adha.net.au](mailto:info@adha.net.au) w: [www.adha.net.au](http://www.adha.net.au)

## Can I be notified and kept up to date with standards in my area of concern as they change?

Register with Standards Watch to receive automatic notifications of new or amended Australian Standards for a small fee. <http://www.saiglobal.com/Information/Standards/StandardsWatch/>

## Submissions for change

Should you have any industry concerns with the access to premises standards or the ability for our industry to comply fully with some clauses or simply have noticed something that may have been over looked please forward your concerns to the ADHA secretary Richard Brooks so that we may compile a submission to be put forward to the ABCB for review.

## Further resources you should view

More detailed information can be sought by reading and applying information from the following resources:

Australian Standards  
National Construction Code (BCA)  
[www.ag.gov.au](http://www.ag.gov.au)  
[www.hreoc.gov.au](http://www.hreoc.gov.au)  
[www.abcb.gov.au](http://www.abcb.gov.au)  
[www.saiglobal.com](http://www.saiglobal.com)

Yours faithfully  
**ADHA Technical Committee**