

**Major findings of the access audit  
of the Formal Investigation on Accessibility in Publicly Accessible Premises**

- a) Housing estates --- Among the 17 housing estates surveyed, three were built after 1997. Post-1997 estates generally provide better access facilities that complied with the design standards. But the newer estates did not perform better in the provision of accessible signs and in the design features of lifts.
- b) Shopping centres in public housing estates --- Nine shopping centres were surveyed. The shopping centres built after 1997 offer more up-to-standard access facilities in the areas of accessible lift, accessible parking space, visual fire alarm and accessible common areas. There is, however, no significant improvement in the areas of provision of accessible entrance, low services counter, accessible signs and Braille tactile layout plan.
- c) Car parks in public housing estates --- The two sites audited provided at least one accessible car parking space near accessible entrances but neither had installed accessible lifts. Facilities for people with low vision were insufficient.
- d) Food markets --- Post-1997 markets provided better access to facilities such as lifts, visual fire alarms and Braille layout plans. But none of the markets provided all the key access facilities in full compliance with DM 1997<sup>1</sup> and thus with DM 2008<sup>2</sup>
- e) Cultural facilities (public libraries, sports stadium, town halls, museums) --- All samples audited were pre-1997 constructions and only one museum provided the greater range of access facilities that fully complied with DM 1997.
- f) Community halls/centres : Three community halls/centres were inspected and variations were found in the provision of major access facilities. The oldest site which was built in late 1960s provided the least range of key access facilities.
- g) Government offices --- Five government offices were audited. Operational barriers found were improper location of tactile guide;

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<sup>1</sup> Design Manual : Barrier Free Access 1997

<sup>2</sup> Design Manual : Barrier Free Access 2008

obstruction to passage; and misuse of accessible toilets and accessible parking spaces. These problems were believed to be caused by a lack of maintenance and staff awareness.

- h) Government health clinics/centres --- Five government clinics/health centres were audited with two premises built in late 1950s. The post-1997 ones provide only marginally better access facilities that complied with DM 1997 in respect of tactile guide path and visual display board.
- i) Leisure and other facilities --- The audit surveyed 7 leisure and miscellaneous facilities comprising two swimming pools, one holiday village, one sports ground, two post offices and two piers. Only the sports ground provides fully accessible entrance to the premises while other sites provides entrances that only partially met DM 1997. Some buildings of heritage value do not provide any accessible entrances for wheelchair users.
- j) Review of accessible facilities in 3 public rental housing estates surveyed by the EOC in 2000 --- Only limited improvements were observed in all 3 sites. Accessibility has not improved significantly for persons with hearing and visual impairment or for people with mobility difficulties.

From the focus groups discussions for people with disabilities and views sought from owners and managers of the Target Premises, operational and attitudinal issues were raised as important components of providing accessible premises.

Key operational barriers identified were mainly related to the lack of information on how and where people with disabilities could get assistance, misuse of facilities, obstructions to accessible routes and use of facilities, lack of maintenance, no formal guidelines and procedures on dealing with emergency evacuation of people with disabilities, and limited information on accessible facilities for people with disabilities in printed materials or on the internet. In addition, the staff working in the Target Premises had not undergone any training on the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (DDO).

Equal Opportunities Commission  
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