



OUTDOOR DINING

Guidelines for ensuring access for people with vision impairment

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Association for the Blind of WA seeks to maximise the independence of people with vision impairment in the community. We do this through advocating for specific design features in buildings and surrounding environments that make access for people with vision impairment safe, and enhance their mobility.
- 1.2 Outdoor dining is a popular pastime for many Western Australians and it is important that Local Government Authorities make these environments accessible and safe for all members of the public including people who are blind or vision impaired.
- 1.3 The following guidelines are provided to Local Government Authorities to ensure outdoor dining local laws take into account the needs of people with vision impairment.

2.0 Location

- 2.1 Outdoor dining areas should be located adjacent to the kerb.
- 2.2 A continuous accessible path of travel, as defined in Australian Standard 1428.1, should be maintained adjacent to the building line. This will ensure that people using white canes are able to trail the building line and maintain their direction of travel.
- 2.3 A continuous accessible path of travel should be clear of all obstacles including bollards, store merchandise, street furniture, planters and sandwich billboards.
- 2.4 Business operators and owners should be made aware of the dangers that obstacles on footpaths present for pedestrians who are blind or vision impaired.

3.0 Barriers

- 3.1 Barriers used to separate diners from vehicular traffic, for example fabric screens, should provide a strong colour contrast to the surrounding environment. The use of colour contrast allows a person with vision impairment to more easily locate structural features in the built environment.

- 3.2 Where planter boxes are used to define a dining area, they should be placed out of the line of travel to avoid them becoming a hazard for pedestrians.
- 3.3 The materials used for barriers should not create problems of glare for example, perspex or glass. Visual confusion is caused by reflection and glare from shiny surfaces and should therefore be kept to an absolute minimum or avoided altogether.
- 3.4 Fabric panels need to be taut and firm of a significantly heavy fabric to provide some resistance. Soft fabric screens sometimes yield against a cane, giving no indication of their existence.
- 3.5 The design of barriers should be such that the main body is solid and reaches the ground. Barriers with legs or slats incorporated into the design can be hazardous as canes may get caught between them.

4.0 Furniture

- 4.1 Furniture should be placed well away from the pedestrian clearway to avoid them becoming obstacles.
- 4.2 The colour of the furniture should contrast with the surrounding environment. Pure white and stainless steel furniture, glass tabletops and cream canvas market umbrellas should be avoided to reduce the effects of glare.

Dr Margaret Crowley
Chief Executive Officer

10 July 2002
Date