

### **Submission to Productivity Commission on Standards and Accreditation Study.**

I am an Accredited Building Designer and I have been involved in Architectural Design and Building Industry for the past 26 or so years. I have obtained my Accreditation from the Building Designer's Association of NSW (BDANSW)

The Accreditation system that has been set up by BDANSW, ensures continued high standards of Building Designers in NSW. As part of the Accreditation system a Professional Development programme has been included. All accredited members must partake in the Professional Development programme. This Accreditation Scheme has not been accepted by the NSW Department Of Planning (DoP) and therefore has no government approval.

Continued submissions to the DoP has resulted in the NSW government saying they don't see the need for Building Designers to be accredited so they won't endorse our programme.

Our Accreditation has followed proper protocol for National standards but still no action by the NSW government.

I request a review of this Accreditation Scheme and request that the BDANSW Accreditation system be formerly accepted for implementation in NSW asap.

I request this issue be considered in this current National review of Standards & Accreditation.

To be able to carry out work as an Accredited Building Designer it is necessary to have a sound knowledge of the required Standards relating to the Building Industry, which are also referenced in Specifications that accompany a Building Contract and also referenced in the Building Code of Australia (BCA).

Building Designers, Architects, and Builders and all Building Professionals are continually faced with ever increasing cost of clear ACCESS to STANDARDS, which are continually updated and become redundant, some annually. This cost is also compounded many times to the Home/Building owners in the form of higher overheads, hence higher fees, by the need for all Building Professionals to have access to these documents.

Being a sole trader as most Building Designers are, with a limited budget, standards tend not to get renewed as regularly as they should.

Standards are continually changing, as they should, so if you purchase a Standard or set of Standards this year it may well be out of date by the following year due to revisions. In fact if you purchase the BCA on disc it has an inbuilt time line of one year after which time it switches off and you can't access it.

Building Industry Professionals should have open, and easy access to Standards that they are expected to comply and work with.

Access to Australian Standards should be free over the internet, as are most Local Council Development Control Plan's, Local Environment Plan's and other relevant documents. Standards by their nature are the minimum standard that is expected by society for the system the Standard is referring to, and which the activity should perform. They should be available freely on a government website where as required they can be continually kept up dated. It is not acceptable for any Building Professional not to be able to afford access to Standards. They should be readily available and accessed by all. This could be a system whereby it could be read free of charge over the internet and if prints / hard copies of the relevant standard are required a fee be introduced / charged for a copy of the document required.

The cost of a set of Building Standards (not all standards) and the BCA is in excess of \$1500 annually to keep up to date. This is totally unacceptable in today's society.

Australian Standards should be more accessible and available to all who practice in the Building Industry. I request that this be considered by this Commission.

**Keith Smith**

Accredited Building Designer. (Member Building Designers Association of NSW)

