

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **PUBLIC VIEWS SOUGHT ON REVISED BARRIER-FREE CODE**

As announced by the Minister for National Development, Mr Mah Bow Tan, the draft of the revised Code on Barrier-free Accessibility in Buildings will be open for public feedback with effect from 1 July 2007. The revised Code aims to create a more accessible and seamlessly connected built environment for everyone. The feedback exercise will run for a period of one month at the BCA website.

2. BCA chaired the Code Review Committee, which was formed in November 2005 comprising representatives from relevant government agencies, industry players such as REDAS and SIA, and voluntary welfare organizations (see Annex A). The committee aims to update the BFA Code to meet the needs of a larger group of users. Specifically, the objectives of the review are:

- a. To expand the scope from the BFA provisions for the buildings to the whole built environment.
- b. To incorporate new requirements for the purpose of improving accessibility at interfaces between buildings and from buildings to infra-structures.
- c. To provide elder-friendly features and other mandatory requirements for specific users.
- d. To update the BFA code in response to feedback from the industry and to meet the need of users.

3. This feedback exercise provides an opportunity for members of the public to contribute their comments and suggestions, which would complement the Code Review Committee's deliberations and preliminary recommendations. Some of the areas that the committee has looked into include improving accessibility in parks and open spaces, improving interconnection between buildings and their infrastructures, making homes, workplace and multi-storey carparks friendlier, etc. (See Annex B). The public's feedback would help the committee to refine its recommendations before the revised code is finalized for release this October.

4. Dr John Keung, BCA's CEO said, "The Code Review Committee's work is taking place during a vital time when Singapore is expecting a growing ageing population. We have already held several discussions to revise the BFA Code with

the key stakeholders. This feedback exercise is another channel to allow members of the public who care passionately for their living environment to come forward and have a say in shaping the development of their built environment in the near future."

5. As the revised code covers more than just accessibility within the buildings, the title of the revised code will be changed to '**Code on Accessibility in the Built Environment 2007**'.

6. Feedback and comments can be submitted via BCA's website [www.bca.gov.sg](http://www.bca.gov.sg), or emailed to [bca\\_bfa\\_upgrading@bca.gov.sg](mailto:bca_bfa_upgrading@bca.gov.sg) or faxed to 63254437.

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**Issued by the Building and Construction Authority on 30 June 2007**

Members of the Code Review Committee

- 1) Government Agencies
  - a) Building and Construction Authority (BCA)
  - b) Housing and Development Board (HDB)
  - c) Land Transport Authority (LTA)
  - d) National Parks Board (NParks)
  - e) Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA)
  - f) Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS)
  - g) National Council of Social Services (NCSS)
  
- 2) Voluntary Welfare Organisations
  - h) Handicaps Welfare Association (HWA)
  - i) Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped (SAVH)
  - j) The Society for the Physically Disabled (SPD)
  - k) The Singapore Action Group of Elders (SAGE)
  - l) Asian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA)
  
- 3) Industry Players
  - m) Singapore Institute of Architects (SIA)
  - n) Singapore Institute of Landscape Architects (SILA)
  - o) Real Estate Developers' Association of Singapore (REDAS)

## KEY CHANGES TO BFA CODE

Places/Facilities	Key Changes	Remarks
<b>ENSURING ACCESSIBLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT</b>		
Parks and Open Spaces	Scope has been enlarged to include accessibility to parks and open spaces.	New addition
Transport Stations and Bus Shelters	<p>Transport stations to be made accessible with one entrance on each side of the road.</p> <p>Bus shelters to be made accessible (to cater for new low-floor and step-free buses for wheelchair users)</p>	<p>The current requirement is at least one entrance must be accessible although there may be several entrances.</p> <p>New addition</p>
<b>ENSURING INTERCONNECTION BETWEEN BUILDINGS</b>		
Interconnection between buildings and from building to infrastructures	<p>Requirement for Access Route Plans for common areas within building and from building to infrastructures (implemented since Oct 2006)</p> <p>Requirement to install floor diagrams at an appropriate place indicating the accessible route and facilities for the convenience of end-users - every floor in a non-residential building and where common facilities are provided in a residential building.</p>	New addition
<b>ENSURING ACCESSIBLE HOME</b>		
Bathroom in residential units	Requirement for at least one bathroom in a residential unit large enough to be retrofitted with elder-friendly features when the need arises. Specifications include the width of	New addition

	corridor, size of door, drops at the entrance and bathroom. (implemented since Apr 2007)	
Residential Buildings 4-storey and below	Where lifts are provided for residential buildings of 4-storey and below, all communal areas and facilities at every level must also be made accessible.	The current provision requires all communal areas and facilities at 1 <sup>st</sup> storey in residential buildings of 4 storeys and below to be made accessible irrespective of whether or not the buildings are provided with lifts.
<b>ENSURING ACCESSIBLE WORKPLACE</b>		
Industrial buildings below 5 storeys	The revised BFA code will include industrial building below 5-storey for compliance.	Currently, all workplaces except industrial buildings of 4-storey and below are required to comply with BFA code's requirements.
<b>ENSURING FRIENDLIER MULTI-STOREY CAR PARKS</b>		
Multi-storey carparks	The revision will require that at least 50% of the parking decks are barrier-free.	This is in addition to the provision of the required number of parking lots for drivers with disabilities, to ensure that the multi-storey car parks are also friendly to other users like the elderly, parents with young children and people with shopping goods.
<b>ENHANCING EXISTING REQUIREMENTS</b>		
Shopping complexes, sport complexes, hotels, hospitals, transport stations, interchanges, passenger terminals and other places of public resort	Toilet for the ambulant disabled must be provided in addition to the toilet for wheelchair user	This is to cater to the elderly in view of the growing ageing population.
Hotels and boarding houses	One in every 50 guestrooms' toilet must be provided with elder-friendly features.	This is over and above the one in every 200 guestrooms' toilet that is accessible to wheelchair user.
Lifts in a building	In addition to the lift for wheelchair user, all other lifts in the same building must be provided with	

	grab bar for the elderly and Braille and tactile markings for the visually impaired as well as emergency call bell connected to a blinking light for persons with hearing impaired.	
Cinemas, theatres, concert halls, stadium and other places of public resort	A minimum of 2 wheelchair spaces for 200 seats or less and one wheelchair space for every subsequent 200 seats must be provided	The current requirement is one wheelchair space for every 150 seats.
Kiosks and dispensers	Where kiosks and dispensers such as ATM are provided, at least one must be made accessible to person on wheelchair.	This is provided in response to the recommendation by the workgroup on the Report on Ageing Issues May 2006.
Floor surfaces	Safety concerns such as slippery floor surfaces are addressed by specifying the compliance of SS 485 – slip resistance classification of public pedestrian surface materials.	