

**Submission  
No 16**

## **INQUIRY INTO PUBLIC TOILETS**

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## **INQUIRY INTO PUBLIC TOILETS**

### **SUBMISSION:**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into this Inquiry.

- (a) Provision, design, accessibility and inclusivity of public toilets across NSW included toilets provided in public places ....
- There has always been a shortage of public toilets, and with the closure of many during the Covid period this shortage has worsened;
  - The number of women's toilet cubicles in each block of toilets must be increased
  - Most women need to use a toilet more often than a male, with menstruation, little children in tow, prolapses and other bladder issues, ethnicity dress types, and age
  - As a result women take longer to use the facility
  - In some instances I'm not concerned about uni-sex toilets, except that often men's use of them makes them and their surrounds wetter (piss sprayed) and dirtier
  - Generally speaking uni-sex toilets need cleaning more frequently
  - In public places like swimming pools, and other dressing areas, it is not appropriate for uni-sex persons to use the women's facilities, primarily as there is no opportunity for male chaperones of female children to oversee the location and persons present
  - Toilet doors should open outwards to allow access should someone collapse or otherwise block the door, and assistants cannot enter
  - In many old country toilets the cubicles are so small that sometimes pieces have been cut out of the inwards opening doors to open over the toilet seats
  - Persons with walking sticks, crutches, walking trolleys, etc. cannot access these small toilets

- Outward opening doors would allow great access to those mentioned in the previous dot point

(b) Best practice ....

- Cleanliness (thorough) and regular maintenance are an imperative
- There should be signage on an outside wall detailing the cleaning regime and regularity
- Toilet paper should be provided, but not the whisper thin type
- The quality of toilet paper is a clear reflection of the value that enterprises put on their staff and visitors
- Random inspections and audits should occur, and remedial action undertaken if standards are not met

(c) Regulation ....

- Most public outdoor areas, especially in national parks, have too few toilets
- There are always long queues at theatres, concerts, shows and events, particularly for women
- Even the performers have to join these queues and can be late to return to continue their performances
- There should be a basic ratio of toilets to users and staffing employed to ensure cleanliness and maintenance
- I have no problem with long-drop toilets in remote areas, but they too require regular cleaning and sanitising
- I appreciate that some toilets work better than others, and some consideration could be given to physical location and distance from large urban areas
- Hand washing facilities should be present and work

- There are very few toilets in the central areas of regional and country towns and if present, they can be hard to find

(d) Other .....

- Clear signage and education programmes to address the issue of some ethnic groups and overseas visitors need to be implemented
- ie crouching and placing their feet/shoes on the toilet seats
- Asian women, will use the whole toilet roll, or dispenser containing toilet paper, to 'paper' the seat pan and other parts of the cistern to prevent 'contamination'
- As new people visit the Outback, this over-reaction to toilet use, leaves huge amounts of toilet paper both about the toilet cubicles and blocks, but also blowing outside in the wind, getting stuck in shrubbery and gardens, etc.
- The slowness of these female groups to use toilets, particularly in the Outback, creates long queues, even when under normal circumstances the number of toilets is adequate for every day and visitor use
- This is an additional high impost on small councils in remote areas and State Government assistance should be provided, particularly as it is the State Govts and tourism industry running the push for more tourists
- Taps need to have minimal flows and short flow times. City and overseas visitors have little knowledge or respect for limits on town water and the effects of drought