

**Submission
No 69**

INQUIRY INTO PUBLIC TOILETS

Organisation: Equal Access Group

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The Need for Changing Places in Australia



prepared for

Inquiry into Public Toilets
Portfolio Committee No. 8



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Overview

Bruce Bromley from Equal Access, a disability access consultancy, has been requested to provide evidence to the Inquiry into Public Toilets, Portfolio Committee No. 8, on the design and provision of Changing Places accessible adult change facilities.

This report supports the evidence to be given by explaining the need for the facilities and how they need to be delivered.

What are Changing Places

The Changing Places initiative in Australia aims to provide accessible public toilets and change rooms for individuals with high support needs who require assistance from a carer and specialized equipment, such as an overhead hoist and an adjustable height change table. These facilities are designed to ensure that People with disability can fully participate in the community by offering amenities that standard accessible toilets do not provide. The goal is to create a more inclusive environment where everyone can enjoy public amenities without barriers.

An Australian technical team was formed in 2012 to develop a design suitable for Australia. The design was modelled on the Changing Places design standards from the UK but adapted to use the current Australian Standards.

Consent was obtained from Changing Places in the UK to use the Changing Places name and logo for the final designs.

The Need



The following link is to a short 1'20" video that highlights the need for Changing Places by demonstrating the barriers parents face when away from home and needing to change their child.

<https://vimeo.com/819708484?share=copy>

The Solution

The following link is to a short 2'20" video that shows how Changing Places improve the lives of people with disability when they leave their homes.

<https://vimeo.com/819708377?share=copy>

Changing Places Design Philosophy

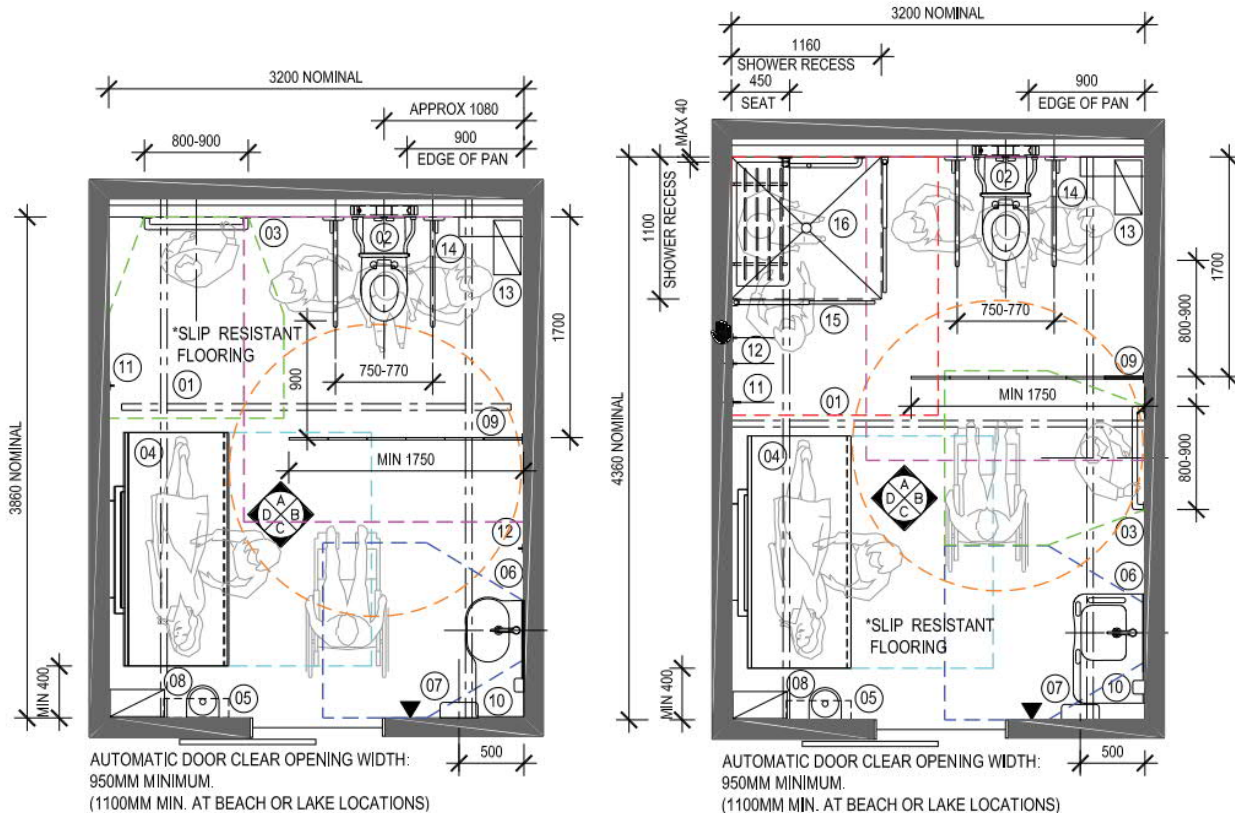
The following outlines the Changing Places design principles:

- Provide facilities with enough space for people with additional needs to use them, including sufficient space for carers.
- Provide the right equipment, such as as:
 - Height adjustable changing table
 - Room coverage ceiling hoist
 - Peninsula toilet
 - Change rails
 - Shower for pool and beach areas
 - Non-slip flooring

NOTE: Changing Places facilities are not intended to replace standard accessible toilets for independent use. They MUST be provided in addition to accessible toilets.

Design Examples

The design standards provide four standard Changing Places designs as examples. These are for guidance purposes only and can be fully modified to suit existing spaces.



Accessible Adult Change Facilities

The Building Code of Australia (BCA) references Accessible Adult Change Facilities, which are the same as Changing Places. However, the trademark 'Changing Places' prevents them from being referenced as such within the BCA.

Accessible Adult Change Facilities = Changing Places.

The preferred reference is Changing Places, as it is internationally recognisable. Programs are rolling out in the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia.

NSW Lift and Change Facilities

Many years ago, NSW developed its own scheme called 'Lift and Change' and ran a trial, but only eight facilities were developed. They did not feature the design and equipment level of Changing Places, preferring to add equipment to standard toilets. However, as they were not secured facilities like Changing Places, they could not include key equipment such as adjustable height change tables and ceiling hoists due to the risk of vandalism.

Changing Places Built in Australia

Changing Places have been established in all Australian States and Territories of Australia:

• Victoria	153
• Western Australia	52
• New South Wales	46
• Queensland	37
• South Australia	26
• Tasmania	5
• Australian Capital Territory	3
• Northern Territory	1
TOTAL NATIONALLY	323

Beach and Lake Locations

For beach and lake locations, the door should have a clear opening of 1,100mm to facilitate access by aquatic wheelchairs. This allows the hoist to be used to transfer people between their wheelchair, the change table and the aquatic wheelchair.



Portable Changing Places

Portable Changing Places are specially designed, portable facilities that provide accessible toilets and changing areas for people with high support needs. These facilities are larger than standard accessible toilets and include features such as height-adjustable adult-sized changing benches, ceiling hoists, and enough space for carers to assist. They are easily transportable and can be used in various temporary settings where permanent facilities are not feasible, such as community events, sporting and concert events, temporary infrastructure, and educational settings.



Federal Grants

The Federal government has recently announced funding for the delivery of Changing Places nationally to state and territory governments via Federation Funding Agreements.

Changing Places (Fixed)

The Australian Government will provide up to 50 per cent of funding for the facility's building cost. Applications for funding must be supported by an itemised quote.

<https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-support-services/resource/changing-places-fixed>

Portable Changing Places

The Australian Government will provide up to 100 per cent of the total build cost for portable Changing Places to state and territory governments via Federation Funding Agreements (FFAs)

<https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-support-services/resource/portable-changing-places>

Should you require any further clarification or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned on 03 9001 5805 or via email at office@equalaccessgroup.com.au.

Yours faithfully,
EQUAL ACCESS

BRUCE BROMLEY
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Author Experience

Qualifications

- *ACAA Accredited Member No 187*
- *Diploma of Access Consulting/ Qualified Access Consultant*
- *Changing Places Assessor. Registration Number CP001*
- *Accredited SDA Assessor Registration Number SDA00002*
- *Livable Housing Assessor. Registration Number LHA10002*
- *Member Standards Australia development committee FP-017 Emergency Management Planning – Facilities (AS3745)*

Author

- *Changing Places Australia Technical Standard – Lead Author*
- *Specialist Disability Accommodation Design Standard – Co-Author*

Example of completed facilities



