

## EDITORS NOTE

As 2010 is in its final stretch we can look back at a very challenging but productive year.

Although a number of matters concerning accessibility have been raised and every attempt possible made to respond to those, we still find ourselves chasing phantoms as it were in the accountability department.

This month we take a look at steps taken by the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) to further mainstream design standards



**Jeremy Deysel**  
National Access Officer

## Orchids and....



The above picture shows a combination of a continuous hand rail and tactile surface indicators at the end of this staircase improving mobility for persons with visual impairment

## Onions



This picture clearly shows the poor attitude that prevails regarding accessibility for persons with disabilities

## SOUTH AFRICAN BUREAU OF STANDARDS (SABS) LAUNCHES STANDARD COMMITTEES

The SABS have launched different sets of standards that specifically look at accessibility in our current reality as the world moves towards improved technology, which in itself, can become a challenge for persons with disabilities.

To ensure that these standards are thoroughly researched and transparent various working committees have been established to track and monitor its development and implementation.

The following committees have been established and their functions among other include the following:

- **SABS TC 59: Construction Standards**  
(contact: [maepa@sabs.co.za](mailto:maepa@sabs.co.za))
  - Terminology for building and civil engineering
  - Organization in the process of design, manufacture and construction
  - General rules for performance requirements for buildings, building elements and civil engineering works
  - Geometric and performance requirements for components that are not in the scope of separate SABS technical committees
  - Processes, procedures, methods, products or components not in the scope of separate SABS technical committees;
  - Basis for the planning, development, procurement, assessment, design or construction not in the scope of separate SABS technical committees

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## **SOUTH AFRICAN BUREAU OF STANDARDS (SABS) LAUNCHES STANDARD COMMITTEES (from page1)**

### **SABS SC 71N : Accessibility for people with disabilities and elderly people** (contact :[danielgd@sabs.co.za](mailto:danielgd@sabs.co.za))

#### Scope of the Committee:

Standardization in the field of ICT accessibility for people with disabilities and elderly people. It is about grasping opportunities to improve access to the information society by people with varied capability of handling information and the controls for its presentation.

ICT Accessibility will ensure that the necessary standards are developed by the local committee by:

- Identifying the relevant standards that has been published by international standard bodies
- Providing input into standards that is developed internationally.
- Participate in international committees so that standards developed internationally reflect the South African requirements.

### • **SABS TC 173: Assistive mobility devices for persons with disabilities**

(contact: [mahlaekp@sabs.co.za](mailto:mahlaekp@sabs.co.za))

Scope of the Committee: Standardization in the field of assistive mobility devices for persons with disability.

- TC 5120.69 was established in 2005 to provide, maintain and coordinate standards in the field of assistive products.
- Available expertise is fragmented and there is at present a lack of effective measures to ensure conformance with regulations and standards.
- The EEA makes provision for the recognition and employment of people with disability in the formal workplace, and the publication of national standards for assistive mobility devices will remove some of the barriers.
- There is a distinct trend for elderly and people with disability to live independently in their own /designated communities rather than institutions

### • **SABS TC SC 22K : Motor Vehicles designed or adapted for use by persons with disabilities**

Scope of the Committee: Standardization in the field of vehicles designed or adapted for use by persons with disabilities.

- For the development of national standards relating to vehicles designed or adapted for use by persons with disabilities.
- To participate in the development of standards, with an obligation to respond to the documents circulated for voting or comment, in a timely and efficient manner;
- For the development and review of programme of work, including target dates and priorities;
- To recommend new work items ;
- To co-ordinate national standards to align with international requirements;
- to produce an annual report for submission to the technical committee.

## **OR Tambo International sets the benchmark in travel for Persons with Disabilities**



In the June 2010 edition of the NAA update we awarded the Orchid to the Special Needs Passenger (SNP) waiting area at the Oliver Tambo International Airport (ORTIA) for its well equipped waiting area.

NAA has noted that waiting areas at the other major airports leaves much to be desired and falls far short of the standards set by the team at ORTIA.

The team at ORTIA has really gone the extra mile in making the travel experience; especially the time before and after any flight is spent in a aesthetically pleasing environment. NAA again wishes to again their efforts in this regard

### **Safety at airports during travel**

NAA has noted, with much concern and disappointment, reports from the Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) that members, in some cases, flatly refuse to use seatbelts provided for in the Passenger Assist Unit (PAU) when either boarding or disembarking from flights.

This matter is of great concern as it does not only place our constituency at risk but also prevents the Airports Company from providing the level of service that we insist upon every time we engage with them through our ACSA Disability Advisory Forum.

NAA wishes to plead with members to do to comply at all times with the rules of the airports and raise whatever concerns they may have through with NAA or a known representative.

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