Media Release
Disability Access Standards Provide Industry Certainty

Almost twenty years after the Disability Discrimination Act was passed, building owners and the community finally have clear guidelines on building accessibility.

The Property Council has welcomed the inclusion of the Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards (the Premises Standards), which have been incorporated into the Building Code of Australia as of 1 May 2011.

"After a decade of negotiations, the Premises Standards provide much-needed certainty for building owners about how to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act," said Property Council CEO Peter Verwer.

"Throughout the process, industry has been committed to improving access to buildings for people with disabilities.

"We have worked closely with the disability sector to get the right balance in these regulations, and we are happy to see the Premises Standards implemented.

"Building owners can now be reassured that compliance with the Building Code of Australia will also protect them from complaints under the Disability Discrimination Act."

However, the Property Council remains concerned that a number of jurisdictions are not prepared for the scheme.

"There has been a significant lag in jurisdictions adopting the appropriate frameworks to administer the Premises Standards," Mr Verwer said.

"It is vital that the necessary infrastructure is implemented as soon as possible.

"In some jurisdictions, building owners still do not know who they will have to apply to for an exemption where they are legitimately unable to comply with the Premises Standards."

The Property Council has called on the State and Territory Governments to put clear and simple arrangements in place for building owners to make claims for exemption.

"Industry does not want to see the States undermine this landmark achievement by adding unnecessary complexity," Mr Verwer said.

Further Comment – please contact:

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