

Section 4 – Provisions of Means of Escape for Persons with a Disability

Subsection B29 – Application of this Section

Clause B29.1

For the purpose of this Section, “persons with a disability” have the same meaning as defined in the Design Manual : Barrier Free Access issued by the Buildings Department from time to time.

The provisions in this Section do not apply to:

- (a) a building or parts of a building exempted from the application of Obligatory Design Requirements in the Design Manual : Barrier Free Access issued by the Buildings Department from time to time;
- (b) any floor of a building on a site of an area of not more than 500m² subject to the area of such floor being not more than 200m²;
- (c) any floor of a building on a site of an area of not more than 500m² subject to such floor having not more than two units;
- (d) a building served by ventilated staircases and using balcony approach in accordance with Clauses B10.5 and B10.6 respectively and the provision of fireman’s lift is not required under Clause D3.1;
- (e) a refuge floor; or
- (f) ground storey leading directly to an ultimate place of safety.

Commentary

Regarding small development mentioned in Clause B29.1(b) and (c) above, the number of occupants is small and the protected exit or fireman’s lift lobby is immediately outside the units. In such circumstances, persons with a disability can stay inside their unit to wait for rescue.

Subsection B30 – Temporary Refuge Spaces

Clause B30.1

At least one temporary refuge space with an area of not less than 1.5m x 1.5m should be provided within the protected exit or fireman's lift lobby of every fire compartment at every floor of a building to which this Section applies. Temporary refuge spaces with barrier free access can be shared by compartments but no part of the floor served by a temporary refuge space should be more than 60m from that space. Such space should not reduce the minimum width of an exit route, the effective width/radius of the landing of a required staircase nor the minimum area of a fireman's lift lobby. Space for manoeuvring wheelchairs shall be allowed for in the protected exit or fireman's lift lobby. For design flexibility, two number of 0.75m x 1.5m temporary refuge spaces (instead of one 1.5m x 1.5m), in visible location to each other, can be provided in the same protected exit or fireman's lift lobby. Examples are given in Diagram B6.

Commentary

No exit or accommodation (except pipe duct, building services room or the like not to be used in case of emergency) should be opened off directly to the temporary refuge space in Examples (c) and (d) of Diagram B6.

Clause B30.2

The temporary refuge space should be accessible to persons with a disability and free from obstruction at all times.

Commentary

The area of temporary refuge space should be a clear space and, when being occupied by persons with a disability in case of fire, should not block any fire service installations and equipment.

Clause B30.3

Any door from the common area leading to a temporary refuge space should have a clear width of not less than 850mm or such width as required under Table B2, whichever is greater; and door handle at not less than 950mm and not more than 1050mm above the finished floor level, measured from the top surface of the grip should be provided to one side of the door.

Commentary

Wider doors up to 950mm shall be a good practice to cater for the use of large powered wheelchairs.

Clause B30.4

A closed-circuit television and direct intercom link, both backed up by emergency power for at least 1 hour, should be provided to every temporary refuge space for communication with the management office of the building. The height of the intercom link shall not be less than 900mm and not more than 1200mm above the floor level.

Commentary

For the purpose of Clause B30.4, management office includes such similar management facilities such as caretaker's counter and the like. The closed-circuit television and direct intercom link should be linked to a monitor and a panel respectively at the management office showing or indicating the temporary refuge spaces at which persons with a disability are waiting for rescue. If the building does not have a management office, such monitor and panel should be placed beside the fire services control panel.

Clause B30.5

A securely fixed notice in the following form with an international symbol of accessibility, and words and characters of not less than 50mm high should be displayed at a conspicuous position on the wall and floor of each temporary refuge space.



Clause B30.6

Each temporary refuge space should be well-demarcated on floor by means of contrasting colour to clearly discern from the remainder areas of the storey. For the temporary refuge space provided at a lift lobby as illustrated in Example (a) or (b) of Diagram B6, where a higher standard of finishes and outlook is anticipated, demarcating strips to identify the temporary refuge space may be accepted.

Clause B30.7

Securely fixed directional signs in the following form with an international symbol of accessibility and words and characters not less than 50mm high should be displayed at conspicuous locations in the common parts of every storey provided with temporary refuge space for guiding persons with a disability to the location of such space.

