

# Office Accommodation Workspace and Fitout Standards

Contents

|     |                                           |    |
|-----|-------------------------------------------|----|
| 1.0 | Introduction                              | 1  |
| 2.0 | Objectives                                | 1  |
| 3.0 | Application                               | 1  |
| 3.1 | Agencies                                  | 1  |
| 3.2 | Legislation                               | 1  |
| 3.3 | Ministerial office accommodation          | 2  |
| 4.0 | Approval of office accommodation projects | 2  |
| 5.0 | Design principles                         | 3  |
| 6.0 | Workspace areas                           | 5  |
| 6.1 | General                                   | 5  |
| 6.2 | Enclosed offices                          | 6  |
| 6.3 | Workstations                              | 7  |
| 6.4 | Support spaces                            | 9  |
| 6.5 | Circulation space                         | 10 |
| 6.6 | Unencumbered space                        | 10 |
| 6.7 | Non-standard inclusions                   | 11 |
| 6.8 | Potential inconsistencies                 | 11 |
| 7.0 | Materials and cost                        | 11 |
| 7.1 | General                                   | 11 |
| 7.2 | Partitions                                | 11 |
| 7.3 | Ceilings                                  | 12 |
| 7.4 | Flooring                                  | 12 |
| 7.5 | Lighting                                  | 12 |
| 7.6 | Ensuites and kitchenettes                 | 12 |
| 7.7 | Lunchrooms                                | 13 |
| 7.8 | Privacy                                   | 13 |

|                                       |           |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>8.0 Furniture</b>                  | <b>14</b> |
| 8.1 General                           | 14        |
| 8.2 Workstation/desk furniture        | 14        |
| 8.3 Screens                           | 14        |
| 8.4 Chairs                            | 14        |
| 8.5 Furniture for support spaces      | 14        |
| 8.6 Built-in furniture                | 14        |
| 8.7 Mobile furniture                  | 14        |
| 8.8 Ergonomics                        | 15        |
| <b>9.0 Equipment</b>                  | <b>15</b> |
| 9.1 Infrastructure                    | 15        |
| 9.2 Office equipment                  | 15        |
| <b>10.0 Value management</b>          | <b>15</b> |
| 10.1 General                          | 15        |
| 10.2 Materials and products           | 16        |
| 10.3 Churn management                 | 16        |
| <b>11.0 Benchmarks</b>                | <b>16</b> |
| 11.1 Workplace density                | 16        |
| 11.2 Project cost                     | 17        |
| <b>12.0 Special workplaces</b>        | <b>18</b> |
| 12.1 Call centres                     | 18        |
| 12.1.2 Fitout considerations          | 18        |
| 12.2 Tribunals                        | 19        |
| <b>13.0 Ecological sustainability</b> | <b>20</b> |
| <b>14.0 Accessibility</b>             | <b>20</b> |
| 14.1 Legislation                      | 20        |
| 14.2 Fitout implications              | 21        |
| 14.3 Design approach                  | 21        |
| <b>15.0 Special projects</b>          | <b>21</b> |
| <b>16.0 Additional information</b>    | <b>21</b> |

## 1.0 Introduction

These standards form part of the Office Accommodation Management Framework (OAMF) suite of documents. The OAMF integrates policies, process, activities and guidelines for government agencies in relation to establishing office accommodation needs, acquiring and fitting out suitable space, utilising that space effectively and managing the accommodation-change process.

Compared with major capital assets such as buildings, roads, and dams, the fitout of the office workplace has a shorter life cycle. Whereas major assets have life spans of 30 or more years before refurbishment or adaptation, office fitouts have a shorter physical life of up to 15 years, but are likely to be adapted and reconfigured several times during that period.

It is therefore important to ensure that, not only is the initial fitout investment appropriate functionally and financially, but also that the fitout is designed and constructed for adaptability and functional change in the most cost-effective way.

These standards support the Office Accommodation Management Framework (OAMF) and are consistent with office accommodation related Cabinet decisions.

These standards replace the Queensland Government Office Fitout Guidelines of November 1999.

## 2.0 Objectives

The objective of these standards is to promote and support the provision of government office accommodation that is:

- safe, healthy and legislatively compliant
- functional and cost-effective
- consistent, equitable and sustainable
- adaptable to new ways of working and new technology.

## 3.0 Application

These standards provide general and specific recommendations for the design and construction of appropriate government office accommodation.

### 3.1 Agencies

These standards apply generally to all Queensland Government departments as defined in s4A of the *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977* and to all Queensland Government statutory authorities that are wholly or partly funded through the Queensland State Budget.

These standards apply to commercialised business units but do not apply to Queensland Government corporations and to certain operational workplaces such as police stations and workplaces delivering clinical services. In the case of unique operational workplaces, separate and specific workspace standards might be required. The Department of Housing and Public Works (HPW) should be consulted if such standards are proposed.

### 3.2 Legislation

Certain legislation applies to office fitout design and construction. For example, office fitout must comply with the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995* and associated regulations, the *Building Act 1975* and incorporated regulations and codes, the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*. Agencies are responsible for compliance.

### 3.3 Ministerial office accommodation

These standards do not apply to Ministerial office accommodation, for which there are separate arrangements.

## 4.0 Approval of office accommodation projects

All office accommodation projects require assessment and technical approval under the Office Accommodation Project Approval Procedure initiated by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and administered by HPW. All office accommodation projects are required to be consistent with these standards to achieve technical approval.

When office accommodation projects are proposed in government-owned office buildings or in buildings leased from the private sector, the following technical approval requirements apply:

- Agency-funded projects up to \$100 000 may be assessed and approved internally by an appropriately delegated officer of the agency. Projects must comply strictly with the Queensland Government *Office accommodation workspace and fitout standards*. Details of these projects are to be forwarded to the HPW Accommodation Office for centralised reporting and benchmarking purposes within four weeks of the final cost estimate sign off. Details should include the location of the work, the final cost, the floor area, the number of staff, the time frame for completion, the existing and proposed plans and the scope and nature of the work.
- Agency-funded projects over \$100 000 and all projects funded through the HPW Office Accommodation Program (OAP) must be forwarded to the HPW Accommodation Office, for assessment and approval prior to any work being undertaken.

The Director-General, HPW may forward the departmental office accommodation proposal for endorsement by the Director-General, Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC).

**NOTE:** Projects involving the modification of space for a Director-General will be assessed and approved by the Director-General, HPW and the Director-General, DPC regardless of the value of the project.

Approval must be sought for projects including:

- the purchase of furniture, security equipment
- construction of government office accommodation (in either government-owned or private sector premises)
- construction of data/computer rooms (including set up equipment).

Approvals are required prior to committing to or executing any new leases including additions or reductions to existing leases. Preliminary lease negotiations by the Accommodation Office can commence on behalf of an agency if a lease clearance has been obtained from the Accommodation Office.

When fitout projects are proposed in space to be leased (including space to be leased under a precommitment arrangement), the same approval requirements apply, with the additional provision that the lease negotiations must not proceed to a binding stage until the preliminary fitout project approval has been obtained.

In addition to the above technical approvals, building owner approval is required for office fitout projects to ensure that the proposed work is consistent with the building and building services and will not cause any damage.

Project Services, Office Interiors can arrange for building owner approval for fitout projects through HPW as part of normal consultancy services. Building owner approval for projects in government-owned office buildings, 'Major Leased' office buildings and 'Other Leased' office buildings is arranged through HPW.

Refer to the practice note *Approval procedures for government office accommodation projects*.

## 5.0 Design principles

The key characteristic of office accommodation in the future is likely to be the provision of a more flexible workplace. It is suggested that the office will become a place of creativity and ideas rather than a centre for routine processing activities. To achieve this transition, the workplace needs to facilitate high levels of interpersonal communication for teams and project groups, and also maintain a work environment that supports individual tasks. In addition, the workplace must support organisational reconfiguration and be adaptable to new ways of working.

The implication is a move away from workplaces that reflect organisational hierarchy and towards a definition of space, accommodation standards and fitout design based on users' needs. This outcome also needs to be achieved within space and cost benchmarks.

There are appropriate design principles that should be applied to the design of office fitout and a number of design strategies that support these principles. The design principles and supporting strategies include:

### Design principle 1: Design for standardisation not customisation

Supporting strategies:

- Incorporate generic planning, modular space standards, generic workstation footprints and generic furniture profiles, finishes and characteristics.
- Plan layouts for consistency with a building's structural grid and the modular dimensions of ceilings and facades.
- Move people not fitout to address churn.
- Move electronically, not physically when feasible.

### Design principle 2: Design for connectivity not integration

Supporting strategies:

- Design fitout elements as separate layers that interconnect and can be disconnected and replaced/upgraded. For example, technology and communications systems should be separable from furniture systems, and visual and acoustic screening should be separable from furniture and technology systems.

### Design principle 3: Optimise hubs, nodes and zones

Supporting strategies:

- Plan support functions (such as storage, meeting spaces, etc.) as hubs or nodes to increase planning efficiency and encourage social interaction. Introduce 'soft facilities' (such as informal seating) in the form of nodes to encourage informal interaction, networking, sharing and learning.
- Plan layouts in functional zones. Restrict built fitout (partitioning extending to the ceiling) to the zone adjacent to the building's core. Use the building's perimeter zone for open plan areas to maximise natural light and outlook.
- Provide alternative work spaces for staff to accommodate different types of working and varying work styles. For example, provision of space to better support collaboration such as breakout space and team tables and space for concentrated work such as quiet zones located away from the communal areas. The introduction of a variety of alternate work settings in the workplace will better support the diversity of modern work practices and creates for a more flexible workplace.

| Alternate Work Setting                               | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Hot desk                                             | A desk that is shared by a number of highly mobile workers who use it only part of the time as they are often at meetings. Either book or 'first come, first served' basis.                                                                |
| Touchdown area                                       | This area supports drop in style working for short stays, with a fixed PC or connection for laptops. It is often placed in circulation zones and could be made available for visitors.                                                     |
| Quiet booths                                         | Semi-open hot desk area located in quieter areas to support concentration work. 'Typically first come first served' basis.                                                                                                                 |
| Team table                                           | An adaptable table set up to support laptop use and team working. Table owned by a team or used as a shared 'hot' work setting for a varying number of people.                                                                             |
| Formal meeting rooms                                 | An enclosed room equipped with appropriate information and communication technology. Usually a bookable room                                                                                                                               |
| Informal meeting area (breakout space/ social space) | Open plan, semi-open or enclosed space with a more informal feel. Usually a non-bookable area.                                                                                                                                             |
| Quiet zone                                           | Dedicated areas designed to support concentration and reflection, typically with no fixed telephones. Requires protocols for it use to support quiet and uninterrupted work.                                                               |
| Project/creative space                               | Open or enclosed space specifically for project, team working and workshop activities. Should be set up to support collaborative as well as individual work using mobile furniture and fittings. Set up for laptop use without telephones. |
| Hub space                                            | Area dedicated photocopying, printing etc. centrally located in partly enclosed space to reduce noise. Could incorporate notice boards and informal meeting areas to provide social and interactive focus.                                 |

Figure 1. Example of functional zones

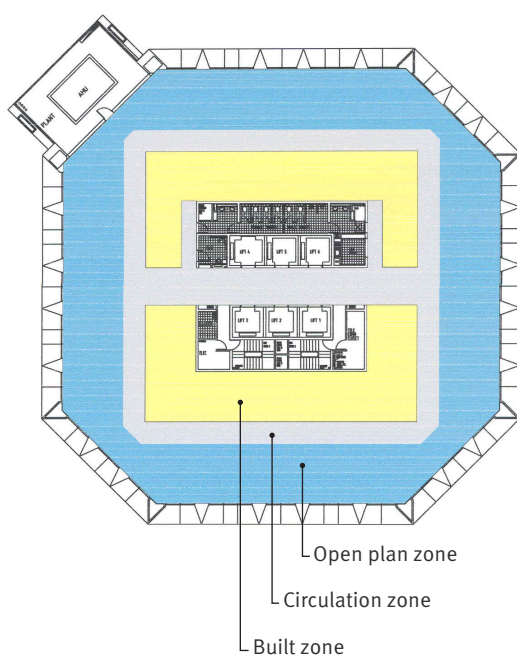
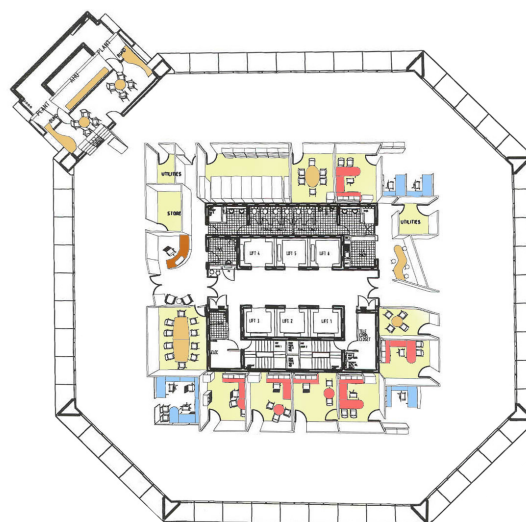


Figure 2. Example of multi-dividable/multi-use built zone modules



#### Design principle 4: Optimise multipurpose space usage

Supporting strategies:

- Design spaces and rooms to support and/or adapt to multiple uses.
- Incorporate mobile furniture and equipment.

#### Design principle 5: Design for minimised impact on a building's structure, finishes and services.

Supporting strategies:

- Avoid facilities and functions that are inappropriate for office buildings such as printing shops, photographic darkrooms and archival storage.
- Design fitouts which are within a building's design floor loading, electricity capacity, heating/cooling capacity and cabling capacity. Avoid functions or processes that affect a building's classification or compromise safety systems.
- Minimise built-in furniture and equipment that is fixed to floors, ceilings, core walls and external walls.

#### Design principle 6: Compliance

Supporting strategies:

- Design to meet legislative obligations such as workplace health and safety and accessibility.
- Design to comply with government policy.
- Design for consistency with guidelines and benchmarks.
- Design for best practice.

#### Design principle 7: Sustainability

Supporting strategies:

- Design for ecological sustainability (community, energy, material, water).
- Design for organisational sustainability (cost effectiveness, culture and values).
- Incorporate and formalise ecologically sustainable practices for fitout maintenance and fitout in use (e.g. energy management, waste management, sustainable cleaning products and procedures and sustainable maintenance practices).

## 6.0 Workspace areas

### 6.1 General

Office accommodation comprises workspace areas for individuals and teams, support spaces (e.g. meeting rooms, conference rooms, waiting areas, storage, etc) and circulation space.

The areas scheduled herein are recommended maximum areas applicable to the particular function. In a number of cases, less space will be required than the recommended maximums, and in these cases, less space should be allocated based on need.

The proportion of the available area that is to be allocated to support spaces needs to be considered in order to achieve an appropriate workplace density target. In some cases, a trade off might be necessary between personal spaces and support spaces to achieve the required functionality and still meet appropriate workplace density targets. Workplace density is discussed in section '11.0 Benchmarks'.

## 6.2 Enclosed offices

Individual enclosed offices should be provided only on a demonstrated needs basis rather than by classification.

The number of enclosed offices should be minimised to maximise the options for adapting the office layout to new ways of working in future.

Directors-General and Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) are responsible and accountable for authorising enclosed offices for officers of classification Ao8 and below. Directors-General and CEOs may:

- authorise the downward revision of individual office areas to match contemporary practice and to correspond with space standards which are comparable with those used in each agency's industry sector
- standardise office areas amongst classifications at sizes which are below the maximum recommended areas
- approve offices for Ao8 or below on a demonstrated needs basis only (office size 15m<sup>2</sup> maximum)
- implement an open-plan policy instead of individual offices for any classification level.

Recommended maximum areas for individual enclosed offices are:

| Classification or description | Maximum area (m <sup>2</sup> ) | Notes                                                       | Drawing number |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Director-General              | 43 approx.                     | Individual office                                           | N/A            |
| Deputy Director-General       | 35 approx.                     | Individual office                                           | N/A            |
| SES 3 and 4                   | 25                             | Individual office                                           | N/A            |
| S01, S02, SES 1 and SES 2     | 15                             | Individual office, within close proximity to a meeting room | 1              |

The above office sizes are based on a module of 1200mm x 1200mm which is the standard ceiling grid module in most office buildings. In the case of non-standard ceiling grids, the nearest modular area to those above should be used.

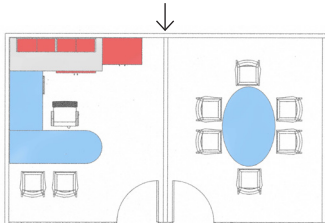
Individual offices should be located in the built zone adjacent to the building core to preserve the outlook and natural light for other workers. It may be appropriate to use glazed partitioning to maximise natural light and outlook for individual offices and to facilitate effective staff supervision.

Furniture in enclosed offices should be consistent with the modular design of workstations. Custom-designed and built-in furniture should be avoided in individual offices. Curtains and drapes are generally unnecessary.

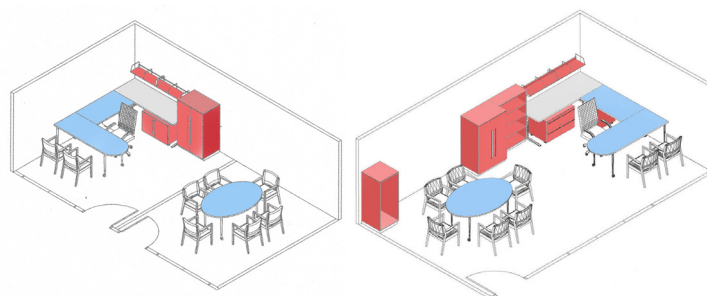
Figure 3. Example of dividable multiuse office/built zone modules

Existing 1 office / 1 meeting room

Partition to be removed to create  
SES office / or large storage facility



Existing two spaces with partition removed



Free-standing furniture components are included in each of these examples, which provide the maximum flexibility and minimum cost of churn in the future.

## 6.3 Workstations

Maximum flexibility can be achieved by using generic workstation sizes configured in varying open-plan group layouts to suit teams and functions. Separating groups of workstations with enclosed offices generally should be avoided because it can constrain future changes to the sizes of team groupings and create physical barriers to effective communication between and within groups.

Workstation systems should consist of separable components that can be reconfigured and reused without requiring multiple trades to disconnect and reconnect services. Soft-wired workstations made up of separate free standing components are highly preferable to integrated, panel-based systems furniture that involves significant disruption whenever workstations need to be rearranged.

Workstation footprints should be modular, with the least number of different variations possible, to allow maximum reuse of components and maximum planning efficiency. Sizing workstations according to function rather than classification is appropriate.

Workstations should be based on standard L or U shaped footprints, configured in efficient clusters. Workstation modular footprint dimensions should be limited to:

- 1800mm x 1800mm
- 1800mm x 2100mm
- 2100mm x 2100mm
- 2100mm x 2700mm.

Enclosure of workstations can be provided using modular, free-standing screens individually or by group. Lower screens facilitate communication and interaction. As screen height is increased, privacy increases but communication and outlook is constrained. Screens should generally be as low as is practical, but of sufficient height to accommodate screen-based storage if needed in specific cases.

Screens should be kept to heights between 1050mm and up to a maximum of 1650mm high in modular increases of 150mm. 1800mm high screens should not be used.

Screens running parallel to external windows should be kept to a maximum height of 1350mm to preserve outlook and natural light for other workers.

Various workstation footprint clusters are shown in drawings below.

Figure 4. Indicative workstations footprint clusters



Figure 5. Typical workstation footprint—4.8 metres x 10 metres (approximately)

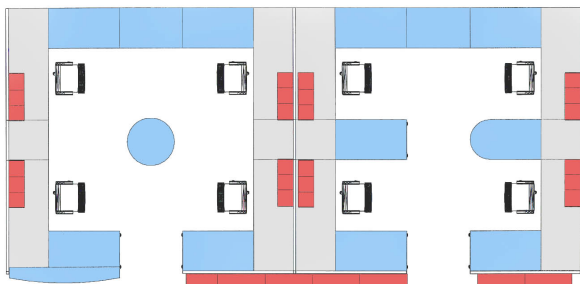


Figure 6. Perspective of workstation cluster type 1

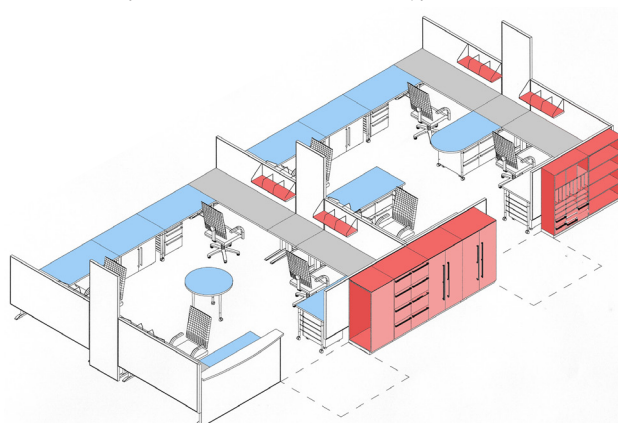
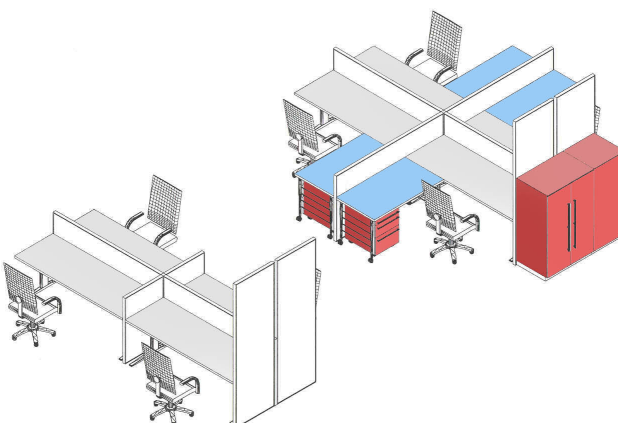


Figure 7. Perspective of workstation cluster type 2



Figure 8. Perspective of workstation cluster type 3 (typical call centre layout)



## 6.4 Support spaces

Sufficient support spaces should be provided to meet operational requirements but also need to be optimised in number to avoid under-utilisation of space. Multi-purpose support spaces should be used to avoid duplication and/or infrequent use. Office rent is payable whether the room is used or not.

Support spaces include:

- meeting, interview, conference, consultation and training rooms
- reception and waiting areas and display areas
- registries and customer service areas
- operational (non-archival) reference libraries
- storage, filing and mail processing areas
- special purpose areas needed specifically for non-standard functions
- innovative areas for social interaction and information sharing.

### Conference and meeting rooms

These spaces should be designed as multiples of a standard 'base' module to enhance flexibility. Large conference rooms should be able to be subdivided into smaller spaces for alternative uses. Conference facilities should be shared within agencies and if possible, among agencies. Unless staff training is undertaken on a day-to-day basis, consideration should be given to the use of external training facilities as needed. When training facilities are provided as part of office accommodation, they must be shared, and should also be multi-purpose to maximise utilisation.

Recommended maximum areas for meeting and conference rooms are:

| Type                           | Maximum area (m <sup>2</sup> ) | Notes                    | Drawing number |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| Meeting room (up to 8 persons) | 15                             | Multi-purpose shared use | 3              |
| Conference room (12 persons)*  | 25                             | Multi-purpose Shared use | 3              |
| Conference room (18 persons)*  | 32                             | Multi-purpose Shared use | 3              |

\* Conference rooms seating 12 or more must be justified and are limited to one per 1,000m<sup>2</sup> of office area. Workplace density benchmark targets must be met.

Training rooms must be formally approved by each agency's Director-General or CEO and must be consistent with the intent of these guidelines.

The total seating capacity of all meeting and conference rooms and interaction areas should not exceed 50 per cent of the total staff number in each tenancy.

### Reception and waiting areas

These areas should be compact, functional and shared whenever possible.

### Registries and customer service areas

These areas need to be designed to incorporate and/or adapt to new ways of service delivery and new technology. The requirements of the Government's Access Queensland initiative must also be incorporated.

### Libraries

These facilities should be limited to operational libraries (day-to-day use). Archival materials or rarely used reference material should be kept in a separate and more economical location.

## Storage

Storage can be classified into active, intermediate and archival types. Active (or operational) storage is associated with workstation activities and needs to be readily accessible to the user. In this case, access is frequent and forms part of the workflow. Intermediate storage refers to material that needs to be generally available but is not necessarily part of the current work process. Intermediate storage can be more centralised. Archival storage refers to high-density storage that is needed infrequently. Intermediate storage materials progressively become archival. All archival material should be transferred regularly to lower-cost storage facilities and not kept in expensive office accommodation.

## Special-purpose areas

Please refer to part '6.6 Non-standard inclusions'.

## Innovative areas

These areas are evolving as part of new ways of working. They are sometimes designed to promote 'constructive inconvenience' to channel people to meeting points where ideas can be exchanged in passing. Other examples are 'work cafes', either stand-alone (in a non-disruptive location) or attached to a conference facility. Professional and expert advice is required in providing and designing these spaces to ensure that their cost is justifiable in terms of organisational value.

## 6.5 Circulation space

Circulation space consists of primary and secondary circulation areas. Circulation space must be consistent with fire safety legislation and anti-discrimination legislation. *Building Act* compliance requires that the designed paths of travel for fire safety must be maintained in the approved condition and configuration. Any change to the office layout that affects the designated fire safety circulation must be resubmitted for new *Building Act* approval. Expert advice must be obtained before any changes to fire safety paths of travel are made. Please contact Project Services, HPW for advice.

It is not possible to identify circulation space as a definitive percentage of the total office area because of variations in building floor plates and restrictions such as structural columns and walls. A generally accepted percentage for total circulation space is approximately 30 to 35 per cent of the net lettable area (NLA).

## 6.6 Unencumbered space

Unencumbered space is defined within the Queensland Development Code (QDC) as clear circulation space with no fixtures or fittings intruding within the space or workplace. The QDC also addresses the provision of a minimum unencumbered floor area of 2.3m<sup>2</sup> for each employee.

Workplace is defined broadly within the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995* as any place where work is, or is to be, performed by a worker or a person conducting a business or undertaking (i.e. the whole tenancy).

Based on these definitions, fitout design for Government office accommodation must ensure provision of 2.3m<sup>2</sup> for each worker out of the total space available. The provision will not require 2.3m<sup>2</sup> unencumbered space to be provided at each workpoint, but rather can be included in circulation space, break-out and reception/meeting areas or other unencumbered floor area and general standards for health and safety are met within the tenancy. Therefore, this allows a degree of latitude and advocates a common-sense approach in how workstations are arranged.

## 6.7 Non-standard inclusions

This term refers to spaces required for specific, non-standard office functions such as treatment rooms, counseling rooms, analysis rooms, rooms associated with parole and rehabilitation functions and rooms needed for special equipment. Careful consideration is required when these types of spaces are proposed to ensure that they are appropriate in an office environment, compatible with other tenants and economically viable. Each agency's Director-General or CEO must formally endorse the inclusion of these types of spaces.

Facilities such as photographic darkrooms and printing shops are inappropriate in office buildings and in some cases, could be unlawful. Expert advice should be sought from HPW if non-standard inclusions are under consideration.

## 6.8 Potential inconsistencies

Because office work and office design are constantly changing, some fitout briefs might, on the face of it, appear inconsistent with these guidelines and/or benchmarks, and yet might be needed for a particular purpose.

In these cases, agencies should consult with HPW to establish whether the proposal is consistent with the intent of the fitout guidelines and whether specific project approval in principle is required from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Large projects will require a business case to justify potential inconsistencies.

## 7.0 Materials and cost

### 7.1 General

Office fitout materials should be appropriate for government office accommodation and take into account life cycle cost factors and capital cost as well as operating costs, cost of making changes, ecological sustainability and community expectations.

When planning office fitout projects, agencies need to be aware of the cost components involved. In addition to the actual construction cost (including furniture), provision must be made for professional design fees, statutory charges and GST. In some cases, the building landlord also requires a fee for his building services consultants to check the proposed design.

### 7.2 Partitions

In general, fixed partitions should be constructed from standard 64mm steel studs with a single layer of taped and set plasterboard on each side and a painted finish.

If acoustic treatment is functionally necessary, then this can be achieved with additional layers of plasterboard, acoustic infill or other specialist construction. Bulkheads above the ceiling should be avoided unless absolutely necessary because of their high initial cost, the cost of removal when the tenancy is vacated and the high cost of modifying air conditioning services to suit.

Acoustically treated partitions involve significant direct and indirect costs and should be used only for conference rooms, confidential meeting rooms and senior executive offices (SES or equivalent).

Complex partition detailing should be avoided unless functionally necessary. Complex detailing includes curved partitioning, drop ceiling bulkheads, display recesses and special finishes.

Glazed partitions should be considered for rooms that require light transmission, visual awareness or have a supervisory function. Examples include individual offices adjacent to the building core, reception areas and some conference rooms.

Locks and hardware must be consistent with the building's standards and master keying system. Locks should be provided only to rooms requiring security, otherwise, latch sets should be used for economy. Card-key and other specialist security locks should be restricted to areas that cannot be properly secured by mechanical locks. Non-standard lock systems can create cleaning issues because of restricted access and need to be addressed with the building manager.

In government-owned office buildings with established partition systems, new partitions must be compatible with the existing system. For example, new partitions in 111 George Street must be demountable, cable free and connectable to the existing partition system.

### 7.3 Ceilings

The standard building ceiling is to be retained and modified only if functionally necessary. If the building's standard ceiling is altered, then it must be reinstated to its original condition when the tenancy is vacated.

Normally, a modular suspended ceiling will be installed as part of the building. All ceiling tiles or finishes altered or damaged by the tenant must be replaced and/or repaired by the tenant.

### 7.4 Flooring

The floor finishes provided by the building's owner must be utilised except for:

- areas requiring special finishes due to functional needs (e.g. kitchenettes, equipment rooms)
- public interface areas where a corporate/business colour scheme is required and endorsed by the agency's Director-General or CEO
- other areas approved by the agency's Director-General or CEO.

Normally, carpet or carpet tiles will be provided by the building's owner. All carpet or carpet tiles altered or damaged by the tenant must be replaced and/or repaired by the tenant to match to original floor finish when the tenancy is vacated.

### 7.5 Lighting

The building's standard lighting system should be used, but fitting numbers and positions may be modified as required by the fitout design and/or legislative compliance.

Specialty lighting should be avoided unless functionally necessary in order to minimise both initial cost and the ongoing costs of replacing non-standard lamps and accessories. All non-standard lighting must be removed at the tenants' expense when the tenancy is vacated.

### 7.6 Ensuites and kitchenettes

New ensuites (bathrooms and/or toilets) are not to be provided in new office fitouts. Existing en suites may be utilised by Directors-General and SES officers where their removal would not contribute to better overall efficiency but otherwise should be removed when accommodation refurbishment or replanning is undertaken.

Kitchenettes involving wet points (water supply and drainage) should be restricted to servicing board/conference rooms directly associated with senior executive areas or to servicing lunchrooms.

The building owner may require that any new ensuites and kitchenettes be removed when the tenancy is vacated.

## 7.7 Lunchrooms

Dedicated lunchrooms are not required under Work Health and Safety requirements if a worker is able to eat in their work area, however, the following must be provided:

- a sink with draining board and reticulated hot and cold water
- cupboards for storage of foodstuffs
- a chair with back support
- a refrigerator suit the capacity of staff in the tenancy (as of 1st July 2005).

The requirements listed above can generally be addressed in the form of a tearoom.

## 7.8 Privacy

### 7.8.1 Definition

In office workplace terms, privacy means:

- optimised confidentiality for the task at hand (facilitating comfort, productivity and interaction but avoiding isolation)
- limitation of distractions and unwanted intrusions (visual, acoustic and territorial).

The concept of 'privacy-sequencing' can provide a range of privacy levels from open plan areas that maximise team-based productivity and collaboration, to casual seating or common areas and to complete seclusion in fully-enclosed rooms. Privacy options can be provided for workers to match varying activities with privacy needs at any one time. The office layout and fitout material selection are the key factors for achieving appropriate privacy in general open plan office areas. Acoustic and visual privacy are closely related, and need to be considered in conjunction with each other.

### 7.8.2 Visual privacy

Visual privacy factors include sight lines and barriers. Lines of sight can be managed through layout design and visual barriers can be incorporated as partitions, screens, furniture elements and landscaping. The degree of visual privacy can be further controlled by varying the solidity of barriers. Examples include the use of clear glazing, frosted or treated glazing, adjustable blinds, mesh or lattice screens and solid panels.

### 7.8.3 Acoustic privacy

Because the choice of material for visual barriers affects acoustic privacy, the two factors need to be considered together. Acoustic privacy deals with managing sound level, speech intelligibility and sound paths.

Tools and techniques for managing these three components include:

- Sound blocking to reduce sound penetration through panels or furniture. This approach requires materials of solid (non-porous) mass. Higher density materials attenuate sound levels more than lighter materials.
- Sound absorption to soak up sound by reducing reflected sound waves. This approach involves using porous, fibrous materials that trap sound waves in a maze of air pockets and absorb sound energy. These materials can be incorporated into fitout components or applied to building elements such as walls, floors and ceilings.
- Sound masking to cover distracting noise. This approach involves introducing sound at specific frequencies and levels to mask unwanted sounds (particularly speech) without becoming distracting itself.

Expert technical and design advice is required to achieve appropriate visual and acoustic workplace privacy.

## 8.0 Furniture

### 8.1 General

Existing furniture should be reused except when it is at the end of its economic life, is functionally obsolete or is uneconomical to refurbish or adapt to new uses.

Materials and products should be selected based on economy, durability and sustainability criteria. Locally manufactured products and materials should be used as a matter of preference.

### 8.2 Workstation/desk furniture

Standard, modular workstation furniture should be used according to the sizes identified in '6.3 Workstations'. Custom-designed workstations should be avoided unless the building configuration precludes the use of workstations of standard dimensions. Economical and durable finishes should be specified.

### 8.3 Screens

Screen heights and lengths should be consistent with the dimensions referred to in '6.3 Workstations'. Free-standing screens are preferable to integrated systems which support work surfaces and/or require cabling to be threaded/unthreaded through enclosed ducts. Glazed panels may be appropriate in specific cases. Acoustic requirements and performance should be considered in the selection of a screen system.

### 8.4 Chairs

Work chairs should be ergonomically sound, of standard commercial quality and consistent with the work function.

### 8.5 Furniture for support spaces

Furniture in meeting rooms and conference rooms should be from a standard commercial range, of commercial quality and of standard dimensions. Custom-designed furniture should be avoided except when functionally necessary or when better economy can be achieved. Ancillary furniture in meeting and conference rooms should be free standing to allow economical relocation and reuse.

### 8.6 Built-in furniture

Built-in furniture and joinery items should not be used unless they are functionally necessary and there are no existing stand-alone furniture items readily available in the market place.

### 8.7 Mobile furniture

Mobile furniture items should be considered to allow simple office reconfiguration and personalised layout. Mobile storage (e.g. compactors and the like) is generally efficient and cost-effective for centralised intermediate storage. It should be noted that:

- mobile storage systems are heavy and floor loading needs to be checked by a structural engineer
- installation costs are substantial and of a specialist nature
- systems must be professionally removed at the tenant's expense when the tenancy is vacated (unless otherwise agreed).

## 8.8 Ergonomics

Furniture must be ergonomically suitable for the task and the person performing the task. Substantial degrees of adjustability will generally be required in order to suit the widest range of users. The requirements of persons with special needs must be met and this might require furniture customisation and/or acquisition of special equipment.

## 9.0 Equipment

### 9.1 Infrastructure

Basic office building infrastructure will include air conditioning, a standard lighting system to provide average lighting levels that comply with legislation, a nominal number or power outlets per floor, primary cabling and centralised connection facilities for data and communication and generic fire safety systems.

Each fitout design will require some modifications or additions to the above building services to suit the configuration of the fitout. In some cases, additional capacity might be required to supplement air conditioning in local areas such as large conference rooms. Any such modifications form part of each fitout project and must be installed at the tenant agency's cost and also removed at the end of the tenancy (unless otherwise agreed by the landlord).

The installation (and later removal) of secondary cabling for information technology and communications purposes (from the primary connection point to the wall/floor outlet or socket) forms part of the fitout project and is the responsibility of the tenant agency.

Office Accommodation Program funding (when approved) can be used for alterations and additions to building services as part of a fitout project. Office Accommodation Program funding cannot be used for the reinstatement (make good) of building services. This cost remains the responsibility of the occupying agency.

### 9.2 Office equipment

The supply and installation of office equipment (photocopiers, computers, printers, routers, servers, facsimile machines and the like) is the responsibility of the tenant agency. Generally, these items are not included in the scope of the fitout project and are procured separately.

Office Accommodation Program funding cannot be used for the procurement or installation of any new office equipment. Depending on individual circumstances, Office Accommodation Program funding might be available for the relocation and reinstallation of existing office equipment. However, this funding source cannot be used for agencies' personnel costs related to setting up or reconfiguring office equipment during the relocation or after it has been relocated.

## 10.0 Value management

### 10.1 General

Value management is an approach that promotes a systematic search for solutions that provide greater cost-effectiveness without compromising function or service.

In office fitout terms, this approach can be used both to save money and to add value. Cost savings can be achieved through continuous evaluation of design and procurement options, and value can be added through designing fitouts for maximum future adaptability at minimum cost and with minimum disruption.

Maximum reuse and recycling of fitout components should also be a design goal.

## 10.2 Materials and products

Generally, office fitout materials and products must be of Australian manufacture. Materials and products include, but are not limited to, building materials, fittings, furniture and equipment. Office fitout materials, products, suppliers and contractors should be sourced locally whenever possible.

Imported materials and products must not be used if an equivalent material or product is manufactured in Australia.

## 10.3 Churn management

Design and provision for churn management can be considered a part of value management and the design approach to office fitout can contribute significantly to the effective management of churn in future.

Churn is defined as: the relocation of people within an agency, undertaken in response to changing service delivery and functional requirements. Churn is measured by: the number of people relocated per year, expressed as a percentage an agency's total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff.

Effective fitout design approaches for churn management include:

- designing fitouts that will readily support reconfiguration with minimum alterations to partitions and building services
- designing workplace layouts and fitout generically for maximum flexibility and interchangeability
- constructing a centralised core or zone of multi-purpose, shared support spaces for the longer-term in preference to specialised spaces that become functionally-obsolete in the short term
- maximising the use of mobile and/or transformable (multi-purpose) furniture.

The opportunities for best practice churn management arise in the earliest stages of the design process. Additional information is available in the practice note *Management of office churn and management of change*, which is a supporting document included with *Guideline 4: Occupancy*.

## 11.0 Benchmarks

### 11.1 Workplace density

HPW has set a maximum benchmark target for office accommodation workplace density. This benchmark target has been endorsed by the Government Office Accommodation Committee (GOAC) for agencies' implementation and is consistent with targets set by other states and the private sector.

The definition of workplace density is the total net lettable area (NLA) divided by the total number of full time equivalent (FTE) staff. This benchmark applies to each separate office tenancy. A tenancy can consist of a part floor, a whole floor or several floors in a building.

The office accommodation workplace density benchmark target for agencies is 12m<sup>2</sup> per person maximum.

In certain circumstances, this benchmark can be exceeded. For example, small individual tenancies of fewer than 10 people might require more than 12m<sup>2</sup> per person and some tenancies in heritage buildings might require more space due to planning inefficiency or structural constraints.

If agencies consider that a special case exists, HPW should be contacted for advice prior to commencing design.

## 11.2 Project cost

### 11.2.1 New fitouts (standard and green fitouts)

HPW has set maximum benchmark targets for the costs of new office accommodation fitout projects. These benchmark targets are for standard government fitouts as well as fitouts which include green initiatives to achieve Green Star™ targets. These benchmark targets have been endorsed by GOAC for agencies' implementation. They are based on the industry's average cost rate for office fitout as identified in *Rawlinsons Cost Guide*. This rate is updated annually based on the Rawlinson's rate for that year.

There are two basic benchmark targets:

1. Maximum cost rate for new fitout projects.

This rate includes the cost of fitout construction, alterations to building services and provision of workstations and loose furniture. The rate does not include professional fees, statutory charges and GST.

2. Maximum cost of fitout per person.

The rate is calculated as: Maximum cost rate for new fitout x maximum workplace density = maximum fitout cost per person.

The benchmark targets for new fitouts (based on a workplace density of 12m<sup>2</sup> per person) are:

| Benchmark target | Cost per square metre | Cost per person |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Standard fitout  | \$1174                | \$17 610        |
| Green fitout     | \$1400                | \$21 000        |

### 11.2.2 Office accommodation cost benchmark ranges for fitout alteration projects

In addition to the above maximum benchmark cost targets for new office accommodation fitouts, an additional benchmark cost-target range has been set for projects involving minor accommodation and furniture changes only.

The benchmark cost-target range reflects the typical cost ranges and upper target cost limits applicable to fitout alteration projects and are based on cost rates per square metre considered reasonable for the extent of work involved.

The benchmark targets for minor fitout changes and rationalisation/refurbishment (based on a workplace density of 12m<sup>2</sup> per person) are:

| Benchmark target              | Cost per square metre | Cost per person |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Minor fitout changes          | \$310–\$597           | \$4648–\$8955   |
| Rationalisation/refurbishment | \$414–\$797           | \$6206–\$11 957 |

### 11.2.3 Fitout cost variations due to change in workplace density

If the benchmark target of 12m<sup>2</sup>/person is bettered (i.e. less than 12m<sup>2</sup>/person is achieved), then more people are being accommodated in a particular area (than at 12m<sup>2</sup>/person) due to better planning or functional efficiency. Because more people are being accommodated in the area, then more workstations, furniture and technology are required. Consequently, the cost of fitting out that particular area will increase by the cost of the additional workstations, furniture and technology.

Therefore, the effect of achieving this better efficiency is an increase in the fitout cost rate per square metre compared with benchmark targets. However, the rate per person will not increase because the same amount of fitout, furniture and technology is being provided for each person.

Every percentage point improvement in workplace density translates directly into a one per cent recurrent saving in rent and building services costs at no additional cost per person in fitout costs.

This strategy of bettering the target maximum workplace density can be applied to new fitouts and for rationalizing space in existing offices. Expert advice should be sought in the implementation of this approach in order to ensure that functionality is retained, legislative compliance requirements are met and a quality workplace is provided.

## 12.0 Special workplaces

### 12.1 Call centres

The common function of government call centres is that of interface between customers and agencies to provide advice and deliver services. The challenge of call centre fitout design is to provide a workplace that integrates people, process and complex (and changing) technology in a way that meets workers' expectations, functions effectively and can be adapted to continually improve the services being delivered.

#### 12.1.1 Building considerations

Call centres invariably involve a high workplace density and intensive technology. Together, these factors place a high demand on building services. Prior to selecting a building for a call centre, it is essential that the building and its services are assessed by building professionals.

Building attributes and services that need to be assessed include:

- floor to ceiling height
- air-conditioning capacity and controls
- power capacity and electrical distribution
- lighting system
- cable reticulation capacity and distribution paths
- acoustic performance
- lifts
- fire safety systems and emergency egress
- amenities, such as toilet adequacy for the number of staff.

#### 12.1.2 Fitout considerations

Fitout design strategies for call centres include:

- Select large, open floor plates for planning and operational efficiency.
- Use innovative planning layouts rather than continuous rectilinear rows.
- Design for change. (Workstations should be one size and able to be adapted into different configurations easily. Data and communications cable reticulation should be soft wired and layin' rather than hard wired and/or 'thread-through'.
- Consider mobile furniture solutions.
- Screens should be separate from workstations and reconfigurable without affecting other furniture or technology.
- Ensure that technology and cabling are accessible, maintainable, and replaceable.
- Design for ergonomic excellence to avoid musculoskeletal and strain injury risks.
- Ensure that lighting is appropriate for the function and tasks. Indirect lighting should be considered, possibly supplemented with task lighting.

- Design for noise management and appropriate acoustic performance. As well as the use of sound absorbent materials, ‘white’ or ‘pink’ noise can be used for sound masking. (White noise masks a broad sound spectrum and pink noise masks speech frequencies specifically).
- Provide appropriate and comfortable support spaces and amenities for training, meetings, and personal time.
- Design for workers with special needs.

### 12.1.3 Workplace density

Call centres can be designed for legislative compliance, effectiveness and comfort at higher workplace densities than conventional office accommodation. Typically, workstations can be smaller and more closely planned with appropriate design techniques. Large floor plates also provide better planning efficiency.

A workplace density target of 10m<sup>2</sup> per person maximum for call centres is considered achievable.

### 12.1.4 Project cost

A fitout project cost rate target of \$970/m<sup>2</sup> maximum or \$9000/person for new call centre fitouts are considered appropriate in view of the higher workplace density.

Call centres are specialised facilities and require expert advice and design. Please contact Project Services, Office Interiors for additional assistance.

## 12.2 Tribunals

### 12.2.1 General

Tribunals require special accommodation that combines conventional administrative office functions and quasi-judicial functions. Opportunities should be maximised for sharing both administrative functions, including reception areas, waiting areas, support spaces and training rooms, and hearing rooms and their support spaces.

### 12.2.2 Administrative office accommodation

Administrative office accommodation should conform to the workplace areas described in ‘6.0 Workspace areas’ and meet space and cost benchmarks described in ‘11.0 Benchmarks’.

Appropriate areas for Tribunal members are:

| Position          | Maximum area (m <sup>2</sup> ) | Notes             |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Head of Tribunals | 28                             | Individual office |
| Deputy President  | 18                             | Individual office |
| Tribunal Members  | 18                             | Individual office |

### 12.2.3 Quasi-judicial functions

Accommodation for quasi-judicial functions includes hearing rooms and their associated support spaces. Opportunities should be considered for sharing of these facilities among Tribunals to maximise their utilisation.

Areas of Tribunal hearing rooms should be established on a case-by-case basis. Hearing rooms should be designed to maximise opportunities for shared use by several Tribunals.

Areas of support spaces should conform generally to the workspace areas described in ‘6.0 Workspace areas’.

#### 12.2.4 Design considerations

Security issues should be considered in the design process.

Areas of security may broadly include:

- personal safety of officials, including staff
- integrity of records and information.

Design considerations when addressing these areas may include:

- minimising secured access routes or paths
- scope of centralising sensitive records and information in secure locations
- need for electronic and physical security to be incorporated into the fitout
- ensure security measures are cognizant of non-discriminatory accessibility.

A security audit of the facility to assess the level of risk and extent of mitigation of risk to be incorporated into the fitout, may also be considered.

### 13.0 Ecological sustainability

The incorporation of ecological sustainability objectives and practices into office fitout design and construction can deliver a healthy and ecologically sustainable workplace with reduced environmental risks.

The sustainability key issues are:

- conservation of resources and heritage
- emission abatement for health protection.

In practical terms, sustainability in office fitout can be supported by:

- Selection of appropriate materials and products. Fitout materials (including furniture) introduced into the workplace should be selected for minimum ecological impact (conservation of resources and emission abatement). Examples include the selection of timber products manufactured from plantation timber or managed forest timber only, selection of materials with minimum emissions (carpets, adhesives, fabrics, paints, etc) and the use of materials with low embodied energy.
- Selection of office equipment such as computers, photocopiers, printers, facsimile machines and appliances based on sound ecological selection criteria including embodied energy, operational energy efficiency, durability and ability to be disassembled and recycled.
- Designing fitout for reuse of components to the maximum extent when changes are required.

HPW has developed an *Ecologically Sustainable Office Fitout Guideline* and is the lead agency for the *Strategic Asset Management* initiative. Further information and expert advice is available from HPW.

### 14.0 Accessibility

#### 14.1 Legislation

Current Australian and Queensland legislation—in particular the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cwlth), the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld) and the *Disability Services Act 2006* (Qld)—places an onus on building owners, managers and occupiers to ensure that they treat people with a disability no less fairly than they treat others. With few exceptions, this legislation obliges the state to ensure that:

- new buildings are designed to be accessible for people with a disability
- existing buildings subject to capital works improvements (e.g. to major fitout alterations or maintenance works) are upgraded to comply with access provisions for persons with disabilities.

## 14.2 Fitout implications

The implications of this legislation are extensive for office fitout projects. Disability needs to be interpreted in the broadest terms. Mobility impairment is the most common and visible disability, but disability categories comprise:

- Physical
- Sensory
- Intellectual
- Psychiatric
- Neurological
- Learning

The workplace therefore must be accessible for, and usable by, able persons and all categories of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities must be not only able to enter the building and the workplace without discrimination, but must also be able to use the workplace and its amenities with opportunity equal to that of able persons.

## 14.3 Design approach

Requirements regarding building accessibility are prescribed in the BCA, which states that new building work is to be designed to the *Australian Standard AS1428.1:2001: Design for Access and Mobility Part 1* and *Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 1428.4:2002: Design for Access and Mobility Part 4*. The BCA also requires that any associated carparking for people with disabilities is to be designed to the *Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 2890.1:2004: Parking Facilities Part 1*. These standards are not limited in their coverage to people with mobility impairment, but cover a wide range of disabilities, including sight and hearing impairment.

Changes to the Australian Standards for building accessibility are likely to occur in future. Departments are encouraged, therefore, to consider briefing their service providers to use the enhanced provisions of *Australian Standard AS1428.2:1992: Design for Access and Mobility Part 2* on the basis that any changes to the standards are likely to be largely equivalent to the current Part 2.

The most comprehensive design approach is termed 'Universal Design' and aims to design for the widest possible range of ability with as few barriers or constraints as possible.

The achievement of truly universal fitout design solutions for every project may be problematic in terms of the practical limitations of buildings, equipment availability and cost, but the needs of persons with disabilities must be met generally for the broadest range of users and specifically when special needs have been identified.

Expert advice should be obtained in relation to design for accessibility. Consultation with peak disability groups might also be necessary, especially for large projects. Please contact HPW for further information.

## 15.0 Special projects

Projects that are outside the scope of these guidelines should be referred to the HPW for advice prior to commencing project planning or design.

## 16.0 Additional information

Additional information, assistance and advice are available from the HPW. Contact information is available from [www.build.qld.gov.au/qgao/oamf/contactus.asp](http://www.build.qld.gov.au/qgao/oamf/contactus.asp).