

**Submission
No 42**

**INQUIRY INTO FURTHER INQUIRY INTO THE
REGULATION OF BUILDING STANDARDS**

Name: Ms Diane Fernandes

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I am writing this submission to address the current Design and Building Practitioners Act and the implication this act has on the Interior Design industry.

I am a practicing interior designer for the last 20 years, running my own small business for 12 of those. I offer interior design services for commercial spaces (class 5 and 6), individual residential units (class 2), and residential homes (class 1). The scope of professional services offered include:

- Establish the scope of work required, program, budget and brief
- Develop functional needs and space requirements brief
- Inspection and analysis of the site, its locality and surrounds
- Identify Safety Issues and code requirements
- Perform a site audit and investigation to determine the current state of the site and existing services
- Verifying key site dimensions and draft CAD building plans as necessary
- Integrate the development of secondary consultant design work into the planning and design of the project through meeting with consultants, suppliers, and contractors
- Preparation and coordination of plans and specifications for alterations to building interiors that affect the structure of the building, required to obtain costs, and construct the project
- Submitting plans and specifications for Authority approval including Development Applications and Complying Developments
- Liaise with the builder and other consultants on behalf of the property owner/tenant to ensure construction decisions are consistent with design intentions
- Evaluate and sign-off prototypes and samples to set standards of materials and workmanship for the project
- Periodic site visits during the construction period

Under the new Design and Building practitioners act "Interior Designers" who provide services involving building work for a Class 2 Building or buildings with a Class 2 part, (all other parts of the building including other Class 6 or Class 5 parts of a building) will now be required to register designs and need to be a registered Design Practitioner to make compliance declarations. Even if the design is only in relation to a part of a Class 2 building, such as one unit, or is a commercial space (retail store, restaurant/café or office) within a mixed-use building (with a class 2), if it involves any Building Work or a Performance Solution, a Design Compliance Declaration is required

Qualifications in Interior Design (not Building Design) render me unable to declare my designs as compliant as I do not hold the relevant qualifications for registration, and currently, there are no pathways to recognise interior designers' expertise to become registered.

Interior Designer is included as an occupation under the Australian & New Zealand Statistical Classification of Occupations (ANZCO) 23 Design, Engineering, Science and Transport Professionals | 232 Architects, Designers, Planners, and Surveyors | 2325 Interior Designers | 232511 Interior Designer.

Given the professions 'similar names and the varying levels of industry registration and regulation, the interior designer scope of professional services is often unknown and confusing and subsequently has seen the interior design industry overlooked in the act.

Including a category for Design Practitioners (interiors) in the Design and Building Practitioners Act and having a clear system of industry registration and regulation (as currently exists in Victoria) is the first step to educating Australian consumers on whether they will need input from an Architect, building designer, interior designer, or decorator for their project and ensuring compliance in the execution of their projects, which is my understanding on the aim of the act.

Without the recognition of interior designers in the act, it will restrict mine and many other small businesses from performing work that we are skilled, qualified, and experience in.

The new framework needs to be immediately reassessed to address the exclusion of interior designers in the Design and Building Practitioners Act.