

**INQUIRY INTO REVIEW INTO THE DESIGN AND
BUILDING PRACTITIONERS ACT 2020 AND THE
RESIDENTIAL APARTMENT BUILDINGS (COMPLIANCE
AND ENFORCEMENT POWERS) ACT 2020**

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

The current Design and Building Practitioners (D & BP) Act excludes Interior Designers from being eligible for registration as Design Practitioners. This exclusion has significant consequences, particularly for interior renovation projects within Class 2 buildings. Often, these projects involve complex elements such as heritage status, structural changes, bathroom layout modifications, and fire service alterations, all of which trigger the Act's requirements.

As a result, Interior Designers have experienced a substantial reduction in work and income, as these projects are now being handled by architects and building designers. These professionals may not possess the specialised skills necessary for complex interior design projects, potentially leading to suboptimal outcomes for clients. Furthermore, this change imposes higher costs on Class 2 apartment owners, who now need to hire both an architect or building designer and an interior designer to achieve their desired results.

My studio has been advised that the Government did not consult with our industry body, the Design Institute of Australia (DIA), during the drafting of the Act. We were assured that the Act would not affect us, yet the reality has been quite different, causing financial and professional distress for Interior Designers and confusion among apartment owners.

My company has been operating as interior designers for 28 years. During that time we have excelled and have been recognised by leading national and international awards for the work we do across residential and hospitality projects. The new ACT means that my company, specialising in hospitality is not allowed to design a restaurant in a mixed use development that might have residential above it in NSW. This is a significant loss to my business that not only I but all of the team that have worked alongside me over the years will have to incur.

Recently, my company has been unable to take on numerous singly projects in residential building because of the new ACT which is also very hard to navigate.

Our work often involves coordinating with service consultants and structural engineers. We have successfully managed such projects for years with minimal risk to our clients and the buildings involved.

It appears the Government did not fully understand our profession's scope and contributions to the construction industry. Interior Designers significantly impact project expenditures, often designing and specifying between 65-100% of a project's total spend.

We request that revisions to the Act include a pathway for indemnified, and experienced Interior Designers to be registered as Design Practitioners. This inclusion will allow us to continue our work, which we have successfully undertaken for decades, ensuring both quality outcomes for clients and the efficient functioning of the construction industry.