

Thanks to travel funding support from the Australian Stone Advisory Association (ASAA), Richard Bowman attended a meeting of Standards Australia CS-072, *Safety in House Design*, in Sydney on 4 December 2007.

He had been invited to address some of his comments on the public comment draft of AS 4226, *Guidelines for safe housing design*. The draft had received considerable comment.

While the Committee was seeking to eliminate references to other standards wherever possible, they considered that it would be appropriate to refer to the forthcoming revision of HB 197, *An introductory guide to the slip resistance of pedestrian surfaces*, given that slip resistant design is a complex matter that could not be fully covered within AS 4226.

This would allow the committee to delete Table 1, which misrepresented the slip resistant characteristics of typical flooring materials. Plain and patterned rubber and PVC tiles were deemed to have fair wet slip resistance, the same as broomed concrete. The application of textured paint on concrete was considered to improve its wet slip resistance to good, although in practice this has led to a change from very good to fair in some circumstances. All stone materials and glazed ceramic tiles were deemed to have very poor wet slip resistance, and unglazed tiles poor wet slip resistance. Promulgation of such a generic table would effectively negate much of the work of BD-094, *Slip resistance of pedestrian surfaces*, and send an inappropriate negative message to the property sector.

It is likely that AS 4226 will indicate that slip resistance is an important safety consideration, and that flooring of appropriate slip resistance should be specified for residential bathrooms, kitchens, laundries, etc. HB 197 will not include recommendations for the minimum slip resistance of residential locations in tabular format. However, the text will assist in the selection of slip resistant flooring, where such flooring is desired, since the same slip resistance design principles apply to both residential and commercial settings.

AS 4226 might incorporate a check list to ensure that consideration is given to the difference in slip resistance and appearance of adjacent surfaces, and other slip-related design and maintenance issues.

AS 4226 may limit the number of risers in a stairway to 16, two less than permitted by the Building Code of Australia (BCA). As such, it is unlikely that AS 4226 will be called up in the BCA.



Richard Bowman
5 December 2007