

Toilet management



Strategy & design guidelines for the City of Melbourne



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1 Introduction

DEFINITIONS

Casual surveillance The ability for the public to informally watch over a place or structure.

Dark colours Dark colours can have the effect of appearing to reduce size. They are popular for the exterior of toilets. Dark colours are effective on screening materials as they are able to be seen through.

Legitimate/intended use Intended and legal use of facility.

Light colours Light interior colours are preferred as they reflect light, and can make interiors seem more clean and spacious.

Lux Measurement of brightness of light.

Self-contained toilet A cubicle that has wash facilities, with a door that opens directly onto public space.

Translucent material Material that allows light through.

Toilets located in either public or commercial settings need to be inclusive and safe environments. They need to be facilities that patrons feel confident to use. To achieve this toilets need to be well located, well designed and effectively managed.

There is a close relationship between design and management. Design choices should be made that allow for easy cleaning and management. Design and material choices need to ensure that the life requirement of the structure can be realised. Toilets should be specified and constructed in accordance with Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD), Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), Equity (access and useability) and Efficiency (cost over time) principles.

The following guidelines have been compiled to support these aims.

The guidelines present information on location, design and management. At the rear of the document, a checklist is provided.

Information contained within these guidelines has been developed following extensive intra-state, interstate and international benchmarking on public toilet design and management. The approaches of authorities who are experiencing success in this field are quite similar, especially in relation to toilet location and design. This experience has been particularly drawn upon. In addition, a series of audits of public toilets was undertaken in the City of Melbourne to assess local practice. These audits revealed examples of leading design and management practise. This leadership has been drawn upon, and is highlighted. The knowledge gained within Melbourne and elsewhere has been synthesised to develop the following 'best practice' Guidelines.

Location and design

To facilitate effective public toilet management, authorities have found two factors to be especially important. Effective toilet management is usually realised when location is appropriate, and design is thoughtful of durability and public safety.

It has been the experience of authorities the world over that unless location and design are carefully considered, behavioural and management problems can be endemic.

For these reasons location and design are particularly emphasised in these guidelines.

The City of Melbourne has developed a design and management framework. This can be found overleaf.

Application

The guidelines have been designed to suit the following situations:

- New stand alone toilets
- Toilets located within a building
- Redesign and refurbishment of existing toilets

Within the guidelines, elements are presented that are generic to toilet design and management. Where relevant, specific guidance is presented for different circumstances (as per above scenarios).

It is intended that design professionals use the following principles to guide design and material specification for toilet construction. As such, this is not a technical manual. Some technical suggestions are offered, but these are not prescriptive.

The approach within the guidelines has been to outline design requirements from the 'outside-in'. That is, requirements are assessed from the proximity and site, through to the building exterior and interior.

As these are guidelines, in every case individual circumstances and requirements will need to be assessed.

In the case of refurbishment, specific site issues and the original design and location will influence the form and degree of work.

If proposed location is subject to a Heritage Overlay or adjacent to heritage site heritage considerations will need to be incorporated into the design brief.

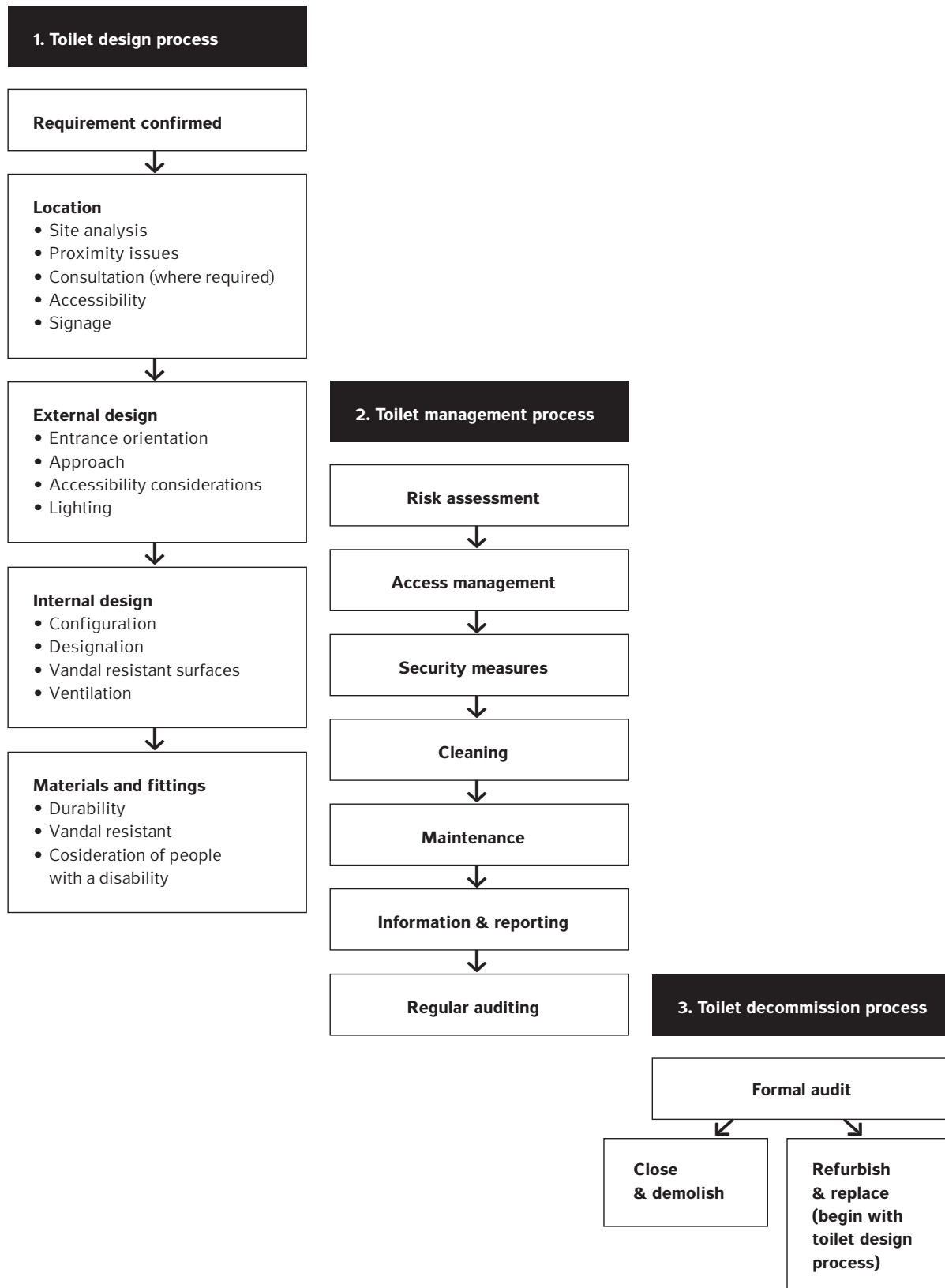
Performance criteria

At the beginning of each section, performance criteria are set.

This allows the reader to understand what outcomes are sought at each point.

Alternatives and ideas are presented to achieve the requirement.

Toilet management and design considerations



2 Toilet requirement

Performance criteria

A toilet is provided that is required and will be appropriately used.

Is a toilet needed?

Public toilets can be expensive to provide, and resource-intensive to clean and maintain.

Toilets that are not needed and barely used, are often locations of misuse and vandalism.

For these reasons, authorities should first consider whether a toilet is required. In some cases, however the provision of toilets is a development condition, or mandated under State legislation.

Community consultation

Consultation should be undertaken to develop a design brief with key stakeholders. Protocols relevant to the organisation should be considered where these exist.

Relevant factors for consideration include:

- Definition of exact population 'catchment' for the proposed facility
- Definition of acceptable distance or walking time between toilets
- Proximity to nearest toilets
- Proximity to residential properties
- Existence, type and intensity of activity generators such as play equipment and barbeque facilities
- Advice from Councillors, Police and the public
- Structure compliments the surrounding area

When is it needed?

When considering requirement, the exact times of need should be considered and defined.

This will assist with management decisions regarding times of opening. (The conditions and times of use should be indicated with signage).

This is further discussed in the Toilet Management section (Page 23).

3 Toilet location

Performance criteria

The toilet is located in the most active position possible to ensure that the facility and users are most visible to the public.



This toilet is located in a highly visible location and provides good opportunity for casual surveillance.

Toilet location may be the **most important** factor in toilet management.

Design or management techniques may be ineffective, if toilet location is inappropriate.

It has been the experience of many toilet providers that misuse is usually greater in locations that are **away from active areas**.

Conversely, the public feels most confident at locations that are visible, and where there is constant activity.

To satisfy this requirement toilets could be located in the following areas:

- Where high traffic and pedestrian volume exists
- In areas where there are 'activity generators' such as BBQs and tables
- Opposite a building or facility that provides opportunity for casual surveillance, and usually has activity around it
- Highly visible from all or most directions / open sightlines

Advice regarding location should be sought from design professionals, statutory planners, Police, and workers within this space such as Council staff and contractors.

Co-location

It is generally considered beneficial that a toilet is co-located with another facility or use. A sporting club or café are good examples. This is thought to be a benefit as activity is guaranteed and constant. This has to be carefully considered however. Often co-located toilets are to the side and rear of bigger buildings, and this may present dangers and management problems.

The performance criteria can be achieved when:

- The use is compatible
- Location is visible
- The toilet is only open during operating times
- Facility (and therefore toilet) opening times are adequate
- The managers are able to exercise guardianship over the toilet
- (Usually) The toilet is within the building and can be seen by staff
- The entrance is not obscured
- (If external) The toilet is oriented to an active and visible aspect

Planners and designers should be aware that a location will change character after dark and when the facility closes. If toilets are required for longer hours, it may be preferable that the toilet is stand-alone.

Entrance orientation

Every toilet must be located well. It is important too, that the entrance is oriented to the most active and visible space. Entrance orientation will be detailed later.

Access

Access issues should be addressed at this stage and should include consideration of people with disabilities.

The approach to the site should be of a gentle grade, and not require steps. A smooth path surface will be required.

Signage

Signage is an important aspect of access and orientation.

Signage should be clear and should be clear and should consider people with low vision. Australian Standard 1428 gives recommendations on viewability and distance.



4 Proximity issues

Performance criteria

That features and facilities in the proximity of the intended toilet location support access, visibility and safety.

Once it has been decided that a toilet is necessary, and a suitable location has been determined, some other proximity factors should be considered.

In this context, proximity refers to the conditions and features around the building.

In some cases, consideration of proximity matters will influence the exact location of the toilet. Additional works, such as path construction and earthworks may be required.

These aspects will need to be reconsidered before and after construction.

Lighting

It is preferable that there is adequate lighting in the general area, and in the direct access areas to the toilet and entrance. The lighting should be even and consistent, and not have brighter and darker areas.

Signage

In the general area, directional signage should be provided to indicate location of the toilet/s.

Signage should be clear and should consider people with low vision.

Australian Standard 1428 gives recommendations on viewability and distance.

Distances should be indicated where not obvious.

Vegetation

The toilet should not be located close to thick vegetation. Select and/or maintain shrubs and garden bed species to a maximum of 700mm high.

It is permissible to locate the toilet nearby to mature trees, provided visibility of the building is not hindered. Select and/or maintain tree species to eliminate branching and foliage below 2000mm high to maintain sightlines to building. Other selection criteria should consider tree root invasion of footings, pipes and high maintenance requirements, which may arise from deciduous trees.

Loitering cues

It is inappropriate to 'legitimate' opportunity for people to wait around toilets.

Built features that can support loitering include:

- Seating
- Notice boards
- Telephones
- Car parks

Planners and architects will have to consider the above with respect to the particular site.

The elderly and parents are examples of those that could be disadvantaged with the adoption of these techniques.

It may be suitable to provide some of the above, and then remove elements (eg seating) if problems emerge.

Grade and access

To some degree this will be assessed in the site survey.

Within the proximity of the toilet, the grade should be easy, or measures undertaken to enable access (eg ramps and railings).

5 Design considerations

Performance criteria

That features and facilities in the proximity of the intended toilet location support access, visibility and safety.



Toilets are a public building type that should have interesting architectural features.



Threatening design and environment – traditional design and maze entry.

When a toilet is first considered, the number of cubicles (capacity) and gender designation should be determined. These aspects should again be considered with public safety and future management in mind.

The required capacity is very influential in design selection.

Toilets should be aesthetic. In the past very basic and utilitarian designs have been selected. Toilets should be integrated within nearby built character.

Relevance:

The following guidance applies most directly to toilets located in stand-alone or external situations. There are however, relevant issues for interior toilets

Configuration alternatives

There are three (3) common ways in which toilets are configured:

- Enclosed cubicle or building, wash facilities outside
- Self-contained cubicles
- Enclosed building with common access (This design is not considered safe and not detailed in this document).

Enclosed building, wash facilities outside

The design intent of this form is to remove the requirement for an enclosed communal space.

The features of this design are:

- Visible cubicles
- A form of screening is often applied to provide discretion for users
- Visible and external wash facilities
- Some means of securing the facility

The benefits of this design are the visibility of the structure and the accountability of users.



Self-contained cubicles

The emerging preference around the world is for self-contained cubicles that face active space.

The features of this toilet design are:

- Toilet and wash facilities are within the one cubicle
- Individual cubicle lighting
- Door locked from the inside
- Door opens outward onto open space

The safety benefits of this design are that there is no need for shared space, and for the users there is certainty of occupancy.



6 Toilet design

Performance criteria

Configuration and form of cubicles are designed to promote a safe environment.

Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) and life cycle analysis

Toilets should be built and managed in accordance with ESD principles. The following list is illustrative and not exhaustive.

Energy

High degree of natural light

Low energy fixtures

Lighting fixed to timing mechanism

Use light coloured and reflective internal materials to minimise the requirement for artificial lighting (use graffiti resistant surfaces)

Use passive instead of mechanical ventilation where possible

Source materials that are recycled, recyclable, and renewable

Source materials that are sourced locally

Source materials that use least energy in manufacturing and processing

Water

Dual flush systems

Spring-loaded tapware

Apply 'greywater' re-use for flushing where permissible

In addition designers will need to factor in life cycle requirements, and select materials that will last for the intended life of the structure. Design decisions will need to be mindful of lifetime operational costs. Design and material selections should ensure that the structure does not readily depreciate, or easily degrade with high levels of wear or cleaning. The structure should be resistant to vandalism. This will translate into minimal additional resource use. Upon refurbishment and demolition of toilets, materials should be reused where practical.

Configuration

Configuration of cubicles will determine the design form. Configuration refers to the number of cubicles and how they are spaced in relation to each other.

The preference is for self-contained cubicles that have individual entrances that face onto active public space.

In some cases, see-through screening may be instated outside the cubicle exit. This will provide some discretion for users, yet provide opportunity for casual surveillance.



Cubicles facing open space - translucent screening provides some discretion for patrons.

Designation (gender)

Cubicles may be gender designated, or unisex.

7 Building exterior

Performance criteria

The building exterior will present well, and ensure that users feel that the facility is safe, clean, well managed, and welcoming.

This is most relevant for stand-alone toilets.

Key considerations are graffiti management, maintenance and image.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Graffiti management

If brick, the exterior should be rendered and painted

A protective coating should be considered

Artwork (paint or mosaic) be considered in order to reduce graffiti 'canvas'

(If no artwork) the external finish should be the one colour

Metal application such as corrugated iron is easy to clean and remove graffiti from

Other graffiti resistant material such as tiles should be considered



Wall continuity

Sections of the exterior need not always comprise of solid material. Sections can be cut away, or the use of mesh can introduce light and increase accountability of users.



Lighting

Exterior lighting be provided – to building & proximity

Lighting is consistent and even

Lighting fixtures be high-mounted and above the normal line of sight

Resistant to insect infestation and vandalism

Vegetation

Bushy vegetation not be planted close to the building

Low level plantings could be used under some circumstances

Information

The designation (gender use/mix) be clearly explained in language and symbol

Times of opening and contact telephone numbers need to be provided

Signage should not provide blank spaces that could provide opportunity for graffiti

Signs be finished, mounted, or protected so as to resist damage, or enable easy cleaning (in the case of graffiti)



Security

Passive

- External gates/ doors – able to be locked and closed
- Lighting, and open sightlines
- Information/ signage – security patrols

Formal – interior

- Attendant booth

Formal - exterior

- Security surveillance camera installed
- Signage indicating use of camera surveillance



Communication

Provision of a telephone booth (in some cases this could be considered a loitering cue).

Sharps disposal bin

Consideration for provision of exterior sharps bin for 24-hour disposal (most relevant for parks).

Mounted minimum of 1600mm



Water

A water 'bubbler' should be provided in the proximity of the toilet. (People seeking water should not have to enter a toilet).

8 Entrance

Performance criteria

The entrance should not be shared, or if it is necessary, the entrance form should facilitate the safety of facility patrons.

Entrance form depends on designation and overall design choice.

Ideally the entrance should not be shared. This should be the aim.

If an entrance is shared, visibility from the outside should be optimised. If there is a choice between modesty and visibility (and implicitly safety); visibility should be the choice.

Capacity, configuration and designation is influential. If a urinal is required, then the entrance form for the male toilet is limited.

Entrance considerations follow:

Approach to toilet

Should be open and use translucent material.

Should have adequate circulation space for wheelchair users.

If required, entrances should be visible to active areas.

Corridors should be:

- short
- wide
- contain no corners
- light coloured

Orientation

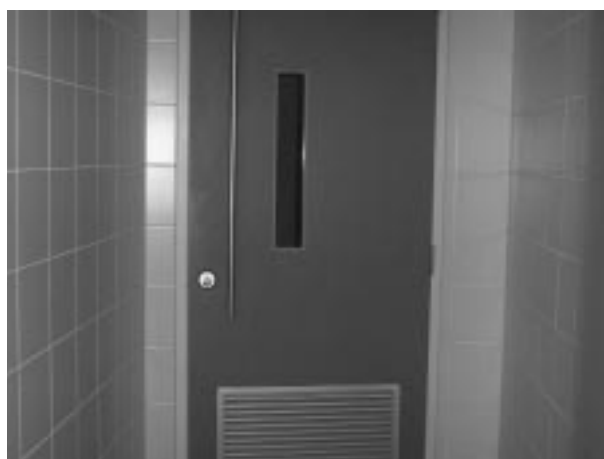
Where practical, doors should directly face onto active public space.

Door type

Internal – food presentation environments

In environments where food is served, double-doors are required to act as an air lock. The doors need to fill the doorframe.

Doors should be solid, but could incorporate some see-through elements.



External

Self-contained

Self-contained toilet doors are to be solid. It is not necessary however for the door to fill the doorframe.

In this case ventilation grills should be incorporated.

There is opportunity to decrease door size and increase visibility. Opaque and semi-translucent materials can be introduced in sections of the door.

Doors should open outwards.

Enclosed building and common access

An entrance door should only be provided to lock the facility.

The entrance should be visible at all times. The entrance should be wide enough for two people to comfortably pass at the same time. A locking mechanism should be provided to ensure that the door is secured in the open position.



It is preferable that the entrance is aligned with the internal access corridor so that visibility is possible – to some degree – into the communal area. In this case, some form of dark-coloured translucent screening outside the entrance should be considered.



The entrance should be wide, introduce light, and allow some visibility.

Roof

There is opportunity to make the roof design interesting and innovative.

Installation of skylights should be considered to introduce natural light.

Generally the roof overhang should not be designed to provide shelter

Gaps between the roof and wall can provide light and ventilation



9 Toilet interior

Performance criteria

Public safety inside the toilet should be supported by limiting contact with other patrons, and by presenting a light, bright, well-ventilated environment.

The design specification of the toilet interior is crucial. Often the user will be out of public view, and they should feel as safe as possible.

These requirements can be satisfied in a number of ways.

Interior design

Design intent should be to maximise patron visibility and minimise opportunity for collision and conflict.

Open sightlines, smooth lines

No blind corners

Use of colour contrast for people with low vision.

Urinals

It has become less common to provide urinals, with the preference to supply self-contained unisex units.

Urinals would ordinarily only be selected in high-demand areas.

If urinals are required or selected, the building form alters significantly. An exterior wall is required and a common entrance.

Urinal design should prevent urine pooling and the build up of uric acid.

Walls

Light coloured and tiled, in order to reflect light and offer a sense of space.

Use of metal be considered. This can be deliberately reflective.

Walls that also form part of the building exterior, need not be continuous from floor to roofline.



Reflective panels reflect light and allow patrons to see around corners.

Floor

High quality, non-slip tiles or stone

Floors should slope to an internal drain/s, or be slightly convex to reduce water pooling



Cubicles

Toilet cubicles should be spacious, vandal-resistant, well lit and easy to clean.

At least one cubicle will need to conform to disability access requirements. If only one disability -access cubicle is provided, this will need to be designated as unisex.

Doors

Gaps from floor and below ceiling

Materials easy to clean, resist scratching

Hooks not be provided (opportunity for theft)

Locks fitted to secure door and denote usage

Open outwards

Doors should be sprung to ensure that they return to intended position

Opportunity for public health information

Pan

Should be stainless steel

Toilet lid not required

Cistern should be recessed, with only a vandal resistant flush button visible

Access panel for servicing required – must be secured.

Dual flush buttons could be considered, but these should be very durable.

Any piping that is required should be stainless steel,



In the above case cistern piping is covered, however the downpipe is vulnerable to vandalism.

Walls

Should be light coloured

Thick, and vandal resistant

Preference for tiles



Fittings and services

Toilet roll holders robust (preferably metal), secured well

Sanitary bins provided

An air freshener unit could be considered.

Sharps disposal bins

Should be provided in every cubicle

Mounted out of reach of children (1600mm from floor, and not above pan that can be used as a step).

Signage identifying bin use

10 Wash facilities

Basin

Wash basins fitted within vanity tops

Preference for metal, porcelain or stone vanities

No visible piping

If only a urinal is provided wash facilities are not required.



Tap ware

Must be metal

Taps spring-loaded to regulate water usage

Spout length should be minimised to reduce vandalism

Easy to manipulate for people with poor hand control.



Soap dispenser

Should be provided

Preference for robust, flat and minimal fixture

Minimum of visible, working parts

Hand drying

A sensor- activated hand dryer is preferable to the provision of paper towels

Metal and fixed securely

Duct should be fixed downwards: ie, not able to be rotated



Mirror

Should be provided

Should be polished stainless steel or acrylic

Servicing

Secured cupboard could be provided for cleaning materials and replacement materials (eg toilet paper)

Access will need to be provided to service recessed cisterns. This could take the form of external access, or the panel may be removed from within the cubicle.

Lighting

Australian Standard 1680.2.1 (1993) requires the provision of 120 lux to depreciate to 80 lux during use.

Combination of artificial and natural sources is preferred. Natural light sources often provide sources of ventilation. Sensor or timer would activate artificial lighting.

Artificial

High mounted and vandal-resistant

Preference for more than one fitting

'Blue' (ultraviolet) lighting is not acceptable

Natural

Skylights

Gaps, grills, batons below roofline (should not be able to be climbed)

Wide entrance

Reflective panels

Gaps under doors

Gaps under exterior wall



Lighting needs to be high mounted and vandal resistant. In this case, light coloured tiles assist with reflection.

Ventilation

Ventilation measures are required. These may be passive or mechanical. Requirement will depend on location, cubicle capacity, and design elements.

Passive

Gaps and grills are provided for air circulation

Mechanical

Through flow system

Extraction system, with separate fresh air intake

Fire prevention

Materials should be selected that are not flammable. Opportunity to start fires, (eg ledges, cavities) should be removed. The opportunity for flame to spread should be minimised.

Ceilings

Light coloured

Vandal resistant and fire resistant materials.

Preference for no exposed beams within reach.

May need to house ventilation and lighting systems

Accessibility and inclusive use

Access for mobility impaired or wheel chair users must be considered.

Separate cubicles that conform to Australia Standard 1428.2 need to be provided.

If only one cubicle is provided, it will need to be wheel chair accessible. Grab rails will need to be provided. Vanities and fittings will need to conform.

The application of ultraviolet or 'blue' light is not acceptable on the basis that this practice discriminates against people with sight impairment.

Public health

It is appropriate that public health information be supplied.

In some cases, it may be appropriate for the provision of a condom vending machine.

Provision for parents

The requirements of parents will need to be determined.

This could take the form of a designated room.

Baby change facilities and refuse bins will need to be provided.

The specification will need to be sensitive to parent needs, and yet be vandal resistant.



A basic parents room - small secure bench, opportunity for waste disposal & wash basin.

Refurbishment

The document has been developed to guide design and management selections. This guidance should be applied to any new development.

The information however, equally holds for refurbishment of existing toilets.

Refurbishment may only comprise of minor works.



A section of wall has been removed (foreground) and holes have introduced.



Interior of refurbished toilet. Wall sections have been cut away with dark coloured mesh instated.

In other cases, major refurbishment may be desired.

Walls may be removed, or wall material may be changed. The number of cubicles may be reduced. Designation may change to unisex.



A major toilet redevelopment - external walls have been removed, and replaced with grills.

11 Toilet management

As indicated in the introduction, design and specification decisions will need to be made with lifetime management in mind.

Materials will be selected that will be durable, vandal resistant, and easy to clean.

Management tools such as locks and signs will have been provided.

Good design and specification, however, will not be sufficient. Effective and consistent management routines will be required.

Managers will need to define processes and define and explain the role of staff.

Key elements include:

- Risk Management
- Opening and closure
- Access management
- Security measures
- Cleaning
- Maintenance
- Graffiti management
- Reporting of critical incidents
- Information and communication

Many of these elements are inter-related and inter-dependant. The combined benefit should be a safe and well maintained facility.

Risk management

A risk management plan should be developed for toilet management.

Risks should first be identified. Risks can include threat to person, staff, property, environmental and reputation.

The risks should be graded in terms of risk of consequence and probability of occurrence. In light of this grading, appropriate control measures will need to be selected. High consequence-high probability risks will need to be the concentration of a risk management plan.

These could include

- needle-stick injuries
- poor cleaning standard
- physical threat/ violence towards cleaning staff
- vandalism

Ideally risk management identification and preparation should begin at the design and commission phase of a new development.

A number of the risks for this type of structure will be related to property welfare. Accordingly, vandal resistant and durable materials and fixtures will need to be selected.

Risk management is a very established field, and guidelines and software exist to support risk identification and response selection. Independent accreditation of risk management plans is available.

Opening and closure

Only in rare and particular circumstances should toilets be left open 24 hours. Toilets should not just be left open in the absence of a management decision. There should be a definite reason why they are open beyond 8pm.

Consideration should be given to opening times in the morning. This could be tied in with cleaning schedules.

Weekday and weekend opening and closing times may vary.

Relevant factors for consideration include:

- Type and extent of public activity
- Proximity to other toilets
- Available times of use of nearby toilets
- Preference/ requirement for cleaning facility
- Knowledge of problem times for misuse
- Advice from Councillors, Police, local residents, and the public

Access management

A number of access management choices are available. This will depend on requirements, and specific management issues.

Opening and closure

Staff and/or security will need to open and close facilities.

Electronic locks can be used, with timers set.

Conditions of normal use

During times when the toilet is open, access management could take a number of forms.

- Open – no regulation
- Open – some form of reception
- Controlled – key required, and provided upon request
- Controlled – remotely opened by staff member

Security

Security arrangements will align with specific site requirements and access management strategies.

Processes should be established to ensure the safety of cleaners. This could involve the closure of the facility during cleaning.

Formal security should generally be evident if it is used. (The point of security measures are that they are obvious, and a deterrent to misuse. The downside with formal and overt security is that patrons may anticipate that personal safety threats are common and likely).

Common techniques include:

- Use of CCTV surveillance cameras outside main entrances
- Use of attendants (informal security role)
- Use of security providers – stationed
- Use of security providers – part of a patrol

A system will need to be established to report security problems that are persistent or serious.

Within management meetings personal safety, vandalism and general security matters should be regularly discussed.

Personal safety

The personal safety of cleaning staff should not be compromised.

Staff should be provided with mobile phones.

Cleaners should be aware of procedures if they encounter a dangerous situation. Staff should not however carry a weapon.

It is recommended that cleaners work in pairs, and that women in particular not work on their own.

It is recommended that staff undertake personal safety training. Within this training staff should be made aware of 'protective behaviours' and how to avoid conflict.

Any personal safety matters or threats should be reported to management. In some cases this may need to be reported to the Police.

Cleaning

Process

Processes need to be established to ensure adequate standards of hygiene and presentation.

The required standard of cleanliness and role of cleaning staff need to be clearly established.

The toilets should be clean when the toilet opens. The toilet should be cleaned at the beginning or end of the day.

It is preferable that the toilet cleaning frequency be relative to frequency of patron use. It is probable that most toilets will need to be cleaned at least twice a day.

Processes should be established to enable spot cleaning when required.

The toilet should undergo comprehensive cleaning with pressure hosing at regular intervals.

It is preferable that the toilets are inspected frequently, especially in high use areas.

Cleaners will need to replace expendable items such as toilet paper.

Specific arrangements will have to be made to service sharps disposal units.

Cleaners should be responsible for reporting maintenance problems.

Cleaners should be responsible for reporting problems with equipment that they may not be responsible for (eg sharps disposal units).

Discarded needles are a sensitive management issue. Exact processes of handling and responding to discarded sharps will need to be established.

It is recommended that needle disposal units be installed in every toilet cubicle. If units are not automatically installed, criteria for requirement should be established. If a needle is discarded in the same location on average once a day, this defines a predictable risk.

A telephone number or contact point should be advertised for patrons to report problems.

Independent auditing should regularly take place. Feedback should be provided to cleaners.

A uniform should be required, or supplied.

In some jurisdictions a cleaning roster is posted. For security purposes it is considered an advantage to not advertise the scheduled times for cleaning. This creates uncertainty for those that seek to use the toilet for illegal or unintended purposes.

The Council should decide what standard of presentation is required and then specify and pay for this. Cleaning should not simply be 'done to budget'. The Council may inadvertently encourage quick and careless cleaning if contract terms are based on a very low 'piece-rate'.

Training

Toilet cleaning requires attention to detail. Cleaning skills are reasonably basic, but some form of training and demonstration is required.

Workplace Health and Safety training is essential.

Cleaners will need to be trained in how to access and service equipment.

Some form of personal safety training needs to take place. The emphasis should be on how to minimise safety risks.

Cleaners will need specific instruction on how to clean up blood 'spills' (Bleach and then hot soapy water) and how to safely handle discarded needles.

Cleaners will need to be trained in terms of what information is required and how it should be recorded.

Maintenance

Cleaning staff should have responsibility to report maintenance problems.

Management should conduct regular condition audits.

Management should establish standards for the repair of maintenance problems. For issues that impact on operation (eg plumbing, lighting) responses should be immediate.

For issues that do not directly impact on operation, (eg graffiti) response need not be immediate. However, a rapid response is preferable, and standards should be set.

Advance maintenance preparations will need to take place. Part suppliers and/ or tradespeople should be identified, with contract or supply arrangements established.

For common fittings, it is an advantage to have spare supplies at hand.

The facility should be frequently audited to assess wear and maintenance requirement. It is preferable to schedule advance maintenance when wear is evident, rather than waiting for equipment failure.

Management should determine the best times for maintenance works. The facility may require closure. Alternatively, maintenance works could take place when facility is ordinarily closed. A recommended maintenance strategy is to “lump” similar jobs in order to reduce labour costs. This should not mean that important works are deferred.

A common problem is that older toilets have stained and discoloured materials that do not appear clean even when they are. This impacts on presentation. Consideration should be given to the replacement of such materials.

Graffiti management

This specific form of maintenance is listed, as it is the most common form of vandalism.

As for other management issues, graffiti vandalism should be considered during design and material specification.

As it is difficult to prevent graffiti in enclosed environments, (especially inside cubicles) removal strategies need to be considered in advance.

Spare matching paint needs to be stored.

Tested and effective cleaning agents should be provided.

Frequent and repeat graffiti tags may be recorded and reported to the Police.

In response to graffiti that is difficult to remove, design modifications may be considered.

Information and communication

A significant part of successful facility management is information flow.

Management should decide what is recorded. Management should decide what is reported, to who and when.

Incidental information such as stock or inventory related matters may be required and used at an operational level.

Higher management levels and asset owners will require higher level reporting. This should take place at regular intervals and as needed.

Management will need to be informed of:

- security issues
- accidents and H&S issues
- major or sustained cases of vandalism

issues that translate to possible breach of contract.

A close management relationship should be fostered with cleaning staff. Cleaners are the “eyes and ears” of the whole management system, and are in the buildings every day. A relationship based on suitable information sharing can often be more important than formal roles and a set of reporting forms. This will vary depending on the type of facility and staff competency.

Information should be both gathered, and provided.

Information should be gathered to ensure established standards are being met. This in turn may be used to provide operational feedback to contractors and cleaners.

Response to specific forms of misuse

Public toilets can have a poor perception of safety and a negative reputation due to specific forms of misuse.

The most common forms of misuse can include:

- Sexual activity and loitering
- Vandalism
- Drug-taking
- Storage and dealing drugs
- Use for accommodation (in the case of homeless people)

In summary, the emphasis of this document is to provide design and management guidance to ensure that public toilets are:

- As safe as possible
- Appear safe
- Deter misuse and criminal activity

As public toilets provide privacy, it can be difficult to prevent misuse and criminal activity. From a management perspective, managers need to assess what is preventable, and to set realistic objectives. Managers will need to consider what displacement may take place following preventative measures. Some forms of prevention (such as design measures) can have the unintended impact of making legitimate users feel uncomfortable and unsafe.

In all cases, liaison with local Police and relevant services (eg Health) should be consulted for advice.

The following indicates possible responses to misuse. The suggestions are not exhaustive, nor may they be appropriate in every situation. The suggestions are drawn from the approaches of Councils across Australia.

Sexual activity and loitering

Sexual activity and loitering often take place at toilets located in quiet, isolated places.

The emphasis of the following suggestions is to reduce the discretion of users. Often the facility will need to be redesigned if the location is considered viable.

Communal areas should be closed. Toilet design should provide for self-enclosed cubicles and no communal areas

Re-design should concentrate on elements that introduce visibility (see page number 22, 'Refurbishment'). A key change would be the replacement and reduction of solid walls.

Toilet doors could allow significant gaps below the roof and from the floor.

Toilet doors could include some transparent and semi-translucent materials and features (so that silhouettes are visible)

'Loitering cues' outside toilets such as seats, public telephones or notice boards should be removed

Any vegetation or built features that obscure the visibility of the toilet entrance should be reduced or removed

Lighting should be turned off at night (or)

Lighting could be greatly increased

Facilities should be closed when not required

Security and Police patrols should be directed to problem locations at irregular times

Graffiti, especially of a sexually explicit nature, should be removed and deterred.

If the toilet has little legitimate use and is no longer appropriately located, a strong recommendation is to close and demolish the facility.

Vandalism

Anti-vandalism measures are inherent within the advice throughout this document. Sections 9 & 10 include detailed and specific advice on this subject.

All fittings and fixtures should be selected, located and mounted to reduce the opportunity for, and impact of vandalism.

Graffiti management is listed in 7 & 11

Drug-taking

Drug taking is a particularly difficult behaviour to prevent. Toilet cubicles provide private, secure space.

Strategies that reduce this sense of privacy may deter this activity.

It is important to recognise that if the user is drug-dependant, then the drug taking will take place somewhere.

Any preventative measures will displace this activity.

Managers may reason that drug taking in toilet cubicles may be preferable to more public and visible locations. In the case of injecting drug use, used needles may be contained if a needle disposal bin is provided in a cubicle.

As with sexual activity, measures that increase surveillance opportunity, reduce privacy, and increase anxiety may be successful.

Specific works would concentrate on the condition of the toilet cubicle.

No flat surfaces, so that drug preparation is not supported

No toilet seat or lid

Toilet doors could allow significant gaps below the roof and from the floor.

Toilet doors could include some transparent and semi-translucent materials and features (so that a silhouette is visible)

Very bright lighting

Security and Police patrols should be directed to problem locations at irregular times

Blue or UV lighting is promoted and applied as a measure to deter injecting drug use across Australia. These guidelines do not support this practice. This practice is not effective. In addition it presents a threatening environment for the majority of legitimate users of public toilets.

Storage and dealing in drugs

In certain locations drugs may be stored within toilets for the purpose of drug dealing. As in the case of sexual activity this would usually take place when there is very low level of legitimate use.

All of the points noted in “Sexual activity” and “Drug taking” are relevant in this case.

In addition the following specific suggestions are presented.

The intent of managers and designers should be to not present any hiding places for drugs.

Wall and roof form should be ‘clean’ and complete

No access to the roofline (gutters are popular sites)

Cisterns should be entirely recessed

The wash vanity should not provide any accessible cavities

No exposed internal beams

No toilet seat or lid

**Use for accommodation
(in the case of homeless people)**

Toilets can be used as shelter if legitimate use recedes and the toilet is left open ‘after hours’. This can be a problem if the toilet consists of self-contained cubicles, as the toilets can be locked within.

If a manager wishes to deter this activity, the following suggestions are presented:

- Toilets are locked when they are no longer required
- Electricity is cut after dark, so that the hand drier is de-activated (this may be used to warm the cubicle)
- Security and Police patrols should be directed to problem locations

Walls are not continuous so as to introduce high levels of ventilation (and cold air)

12 Checklist

ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER IN TOILET MANAGEMENT AND DESIGN

Information gathering

a Feasibility study and demographic information

- Is a feasibility study required? _____
- Has a study been undertaken? _____
- Has demographic information been obtained for the area?
- Are there heritage considerations?
- Has a need for upgraded facilities been identified?

b Have the following been assessed?

- Safety audits?
- Police Service and crime data?
- Disability Access audit?
- Formal incident and anecdotal reports?
- Community consultation?

c Advice obtained from consulting groups

- Community groups with an interest in the issues/or location?
- Maintenance and cleaning staff?

- Police and security services? _____

d Toilet management

- Risk management assessment undertaken?
- Hours of operation considered?
- Access management?
- Security guards or police surveillance required?
- Maintenance and cleaning program arranged?
- Graffiti management program developed?
- Information & communication eg signage, public information, etc.?

Toilet location and project design

Elements for consideration in the project design development.

a Visibility

- Building located in area of high visibility for maximum casual surveillance?
- Appropriate surrounding vegetation?

b Access and proximity

- Building located near existing facilities?
- Existing telephones, seats and noticeboards removed/relocated?
- Disability or mobility impaired access requirements are met?

c Orientation

- Building entrances face active space?
- Maximise natural light and ventilation?

Toilet design

a Building exterior

- External lighting requirement assessed and provided to exterior and proximity? _____
- Lighting fixtures high mounted?
- Vegetation selected to maintain visibility of building and not create hiding places?
- Existing vegetation removed/cut back from building where required?
- Graffiti resistant materials and selected treatments explored?
- Requirement for sharps containers for 24 hour disposal – mounted minimum 1600mm?
- Supply external water outlet?
- Installation of skylights considered introducing natural light?
- Allowance for space between roof and wall to provide light and ventilation?
- Designation (gender use/mix) clearly defined in language and symbol?
- Signage providing opening hours and contact telephone numbers?

b Entrance

- Approach is open and visible to active areas?
- Contains no corners or opportunities for concealment?
- Maximises natural light and light coloured reflective surfaces in order to minimise requirement for artificial lighting?
- Contain high quality non slip floor surfaces?
- Floors slope to an internal drain to reduce water pooling and maximise drainage?

Toilet interior

a Size and configuration

- Number of existing cubicles?
- Total number of required cubicles?
- Number of accessible facilities required?
- Number of male facilities required?
- Number of female facilities required?
- Urinals retained or removed?
- Number of hand basins required?

b Configuration alternatives

- Screened lobby?
- Self contained cubicles with handbasin, no lobby required?
- No lobby, cubicles open into public space, handbasins outside?
- Open sightlines, no blind corners?

c Finishes, fixtures and fittings

- Graffiti resistant materials and selected treatments explored?
- Vandal and fire resistant materials selected?
- Fixtures chosen for durability and robustness?
- Cistern located in duct of lockable service room?
- Cistern enclosed in vandal-proof false wall?
- No visible piping?
- No toilet seats/lids?
- Requirements for baby change facilities?
- Requirement for sharps container, mounted at least 1600mm from floor?
- Interior lighting provided in facilities used at night?



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