

Productivity Commission

Submission on Standards and Accreditation Study

Saturday, August 12, 2006

As an Architect, I am expected to have current copies of Codes, Regulations, Standards and a plethora of related Building information relevant to the area of architecture within which I work. I just received the latest AS 1288 2006_GLASS IN BUILDINGS hardcopy. The Retail Price (non Members) is \$134.20 plus Postage & Handling of \$15.95.

Now. On the Postage & Handling front, I have no issue., ...but.....on the Publication side of things, I'm a pretty astounded. For that kind of money you'd expect a dedicated Publishing Company to produce a good quality publication. Colour Plates at least.

What I received was a black and white booklet.

Furthermore, on page 61 there is a diagram with a Legend showing four boxes with different shading/hatching ???.

Only 1 of the 4 Boxes is identifiable due to the poor reproduction.

Laws should not be for Profit. Laws are to maintain an orderly society and promote safe and healthy environments for the society. SAI Global proudly announced a net profit after tax of \$14 million. In my view, something is very rotten with the way Australia dispenses 'recommended guidelines'.

The manipulation of Standards by way of breaking them down from one Standard into many parts does not serve the Community as a whole. The Cost of the Parts (of a Standard) should come down proportionately. From my point of view, this one company is single-handedly, pushing inflation up. If one considers the number of Industries that are at the mercy of SAI Global's pricing structure, those costs will be passed on to the consumers, Australia wide.

Before the Big Financiers created SAI Global, there was no problem for Architects to obtain Australian Standards. This happy relationship lasted for decades.

Through the actions of greed, I see SAI Global as a Monopoly Company that is doing more bad for the community than good. How can Productivity of the Nation be served by one company that has Australia's Standards by the 'balls'?

The Cost of a home/building/addition goes up because Architects/Designers need to cover their overheads. When there are possibly 6,000 Australian Standards relevant to Architects and those Standards are being updated or superseded at horribly high prices, the Architect/Designer will add this unnecessary cost to the Fees.

Result: Some Clients just walk away; the project does not proceed; a team of Workers lose the job; a team of people (Architects, Surveyors, Engineers, Builders, Trades people, Quantity Surveyors, Council Staff) are NOT being Productive.

If the Productivity Commission is concerned about Productivity it should recommend the dismantling of SAI Global and return control to Australian Standards. This worked for all in the past. Perhaps, SAI Global can remain a Publishing company and Tender for the job along with "CanPrint Communications Pty. Ltd." and others.

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