



Tasmanian Association for Residents of
Retirement Villages inc.

TARRV Thoughts on “Safety in the Village”

There should be guidelines for all Operators defining the minimum safety standards that are to be followed in refurbishment of Units, Villas and Apartments.

These guidelines relate to new builds and future renovations.

Internal

Bathrooms should have non-slip floors.

Bathroom/toilet doors should be fitted with sliding doors, or doors that open outwards; this ensures ready access to the room in the event that a resident is lying on the floor and blocking the door.

Shower recesses should have hand-rails, both under the shower head, and on the side wall providing safe access / egress. In addition, there should also be a hand-rail at the front-end of the shower, and a suitable fixture for the placement of towels for accessing without needing to step from the shower.

Showers should have somewhere for users to put their ‘essentials’, not only soap, but also shampoos and the like, so that those things do not need to be put on the floor, and the user having to bend down to get them (note how important this is for residents subject to bouts of vertigo, as are many older residents). That could be by a recess in the wall, or a fitting fastened to the wall at an appropriate height.

Provision should also be made for the fixing of hand-rails on either side of toilets. Not to say that hand-rails need to be fitted at the time, but the fixtures should be installed so that it will be a simple matter for the rails to be fitted, as required.

Bathrooms must have a ‘Duress/Emergency’ button. The button should be located at a height that can be reached by a person who has fallen and cannot get back up. Several years ago there was an incident at a retirement village where a male resident had fallen in the bathroom, suffered a broken hip joint and was not found for 3 days, he did survive.

Where the residence has steps and/or ramps leading to different levels, then there should be hand rails on those steps and ramps.

Doors should be appropriately wide enough for wheelchair access and egress. Indeed, all doors should be of a width that is appropriate (legally compliant) for wheel-chairs.

The internal door communicating between the garage and the residence should have a deadlock fitted; the deadlock should be keyed alike to the residence front door.

Ideally, garage entrance doors should be fitted with the (new) locking bars, such that the locking bars are automatically activated when the door closes.

External

Footpaths and ramps must conform to the standards applicable to disabled persons. All roading should conform to Australian Standard 1428.1-2009 and the Local Government Association endorsed Standard Road Drawings.

Footpaths should be maintained clear of all trip hazards.

Pedestrian crossings to be clearly marked.

Speed limits on all roads in the village, with signs and speed humps to encourage compliance.

The speed limit in the Village is to be set by the Operator in conjunction with residents and/or their Resident Committee, having regard for the specific conditions in that Village, and shall be subject to the approval of the Commissioner for Transport.

Speed limit signage, and traffic control measures (e.g. speed humps) should be installed as appropriate.

Speed limits in multiples of 10 are legally enforceable; speed limits ending in 5 are merely recommendations, not limits and are thus not legally enforceable.

Notes:

- Vertigo and dizziness affect 15–20% of the adult population [1] and contribute to falls, especially in older patients, among whom 23% are subjected to fall-associated trauma at least once a year [2, 3]. Hearing loss has also been recognized as a predisposing factor to accidental falls.

Vertigo and dizziness frequently affect the adult population and greatly contribute to fall-associated trauma, especially in older patients; the three classes of ontological, central, and functional dizziness may be distinguished.

Older patients are subjected to multiple co morbidities and various pharmacological therapies, which in turn could cause dizziness.

- Posted speed limits must be **approved by the Commissioner for Transport**, and this applies to **all roads in Tasmania** — whether managed by the State Government, local councils, or other organisations. (Department of State Growth, Transport Services). The [Towards Zero Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy 2017-2026 \(PDF 8.0 MB\)](#) shows that safe vehicle travel speeds are a key part of improving road safety.