

# Legislative Council



MEDIA RELEASE

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## Delegated Legislation Committee

### Report into Access to Australian Standards adopted in delegated legislation

The Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation tabled its report on Access to Australian Standards adopted in delegated legislation in Parliament today.

In line with many other jurisdictions, Western Australian law allows for the adoption of Australian Standards or other external material in delegated legislation, including Government-made regulations and local government-made local laws. Through that adoption, the content of the Standard or other material becomes the law of the State. However, unlike the contents of statutes made by Parliament, or of regulations or local laws, the contents of Australian Standards are not freely available. Access to them requires payment to the exclusive holders of the publishing rights, SAI Global Ltd.

It is a basic tenet of western democracy that the law must be clear and readily accessible, and the Committee believes that this is not the case in respect of adopted material.

The Committee therefore resolved to inquire into this lack of accessibility and its consequences for the public, for businesses, for unions and representative bodies, for governments and indeed for Members of Parliament and this Committee.

The report concludes that the lack of free accessibility to Australian Standards that have become part of the law of the State is unacceptable. It is also a problem that confronts the other States and Territories, and a national response is called for.

The Chair of the Committee, Mr Peter Abetz MLA, said:

*We believe that universal free access to Australian Standards should be a right enjoyed by the Australian people, by businesses, by governments, by representative groups and by academic institutions, all of which may be affected by the laws contained in adopted Standards, as well as by Parliaments. We call upon the Government of Western Australia to work with its State and Territory counterparts, and the Federal Government, to bring about that universal free access at the conclusion of the current business arrangement between Standards Australia and SAI Global Ltd.*

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*Not only would this have the effect of satisfying the basic right of those who are subject to the law being able to readily access it, but we also believe that, overall, fiscal benefits would accrue to both the public purse and to the private sector.*

The report can be found at [www.parliament.wa.gov.au/del](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/del)

For media inquiries, contact Mr Peter Abetz, Chair on 0409 076 155.

Other inquiries to Ms Lauren Mesiti, Committee Clerk on (08) 9222 7376.

Further information regarding the committee is available at [www.parliament.wa.gov.au/del](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/del)

**Mr Peter Abetz**  
**Chair**