



## BUILDING NOTE

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### CLARIFICATION OF BCA CLAUSE D2.21 - OPERATION OF LATCH

There appears to be a divergence of opinion as to the interpretation of BCA clause D2.21 "Operation of Latch", in relation to the meaning of the statement '*...by a single hand downward action...*' The Building Regulations Advisory Committee (BRAC) requested the Department produce a Building Note on this matter.

Clause D2.21 states, in part:

*'A door in a required exit, forming part of a required exit or in the path of travel to a required exit must be readily openable without the use of a key from the inside that faces a person seeking egress, by a single hand downward action or pushing action on a single device which is located between 900 mm and 1200 mm from the floor...'*

It is claimed that a door knob, or other twisting devices, can be interpreted as complying with the single hand downward action movement. However, the Guide to the BCA states the following in relation to 'single hand downward action':

*If the opening action of a door latch cannot be a pushing action, it must be a single downward action, capable of being activated with a single hand.*

*D2.21 prohibits the use of devices such as deadlocks and knobs (where the knobs must be operated in a twisting or similar motion).*

*This provision takes account of the need for an emergency opening mechanism to be operable by people with a hand or arm related disability, burns to their hands or with perspiring or wet hands.*

The Department is of the view that knobs and snibs are not downward action devices, and, as such, do not comply with the Deemed-to-Satisfy provision of D2.21. A single downward action device could be a lever type handle.

Please be mindful of this requirement when either approving, or constructing, a door in accordance with BCA clause D2.21.

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