



Making Tourism Accessible for Visitors who are Blind or have Low Vision

CASE STUDY 1 - Shangri-La The Marina Cairns



As a large accommodation provider in far north Queensland, the **Shangri-La Cairns hotel** sits between Marlin Marina and the Coral Sea, in the heart of the city's waterside dining precinct. It offers 255 spacious rooms and suites, 1 restaurant and 1 bar beside Trinity Inlet, 1 poolside bar, and panoramic Trinity Inlet, Coral Sea, and Cairns's city views.

The hotel engaged with the following self-assessment audits:

- Whole of Venue Self-Assessment Audit Checklist
- Accommodation Venue Self-Assessment Audit Checklist
- Hospitality Venue Self-Assessment Audit Checklist

Hotel staff engaging with the audit checklist advised that they found them to be very clear, concise and quite comprehensive. The items listed allowed staff to identify deficiencies in the business in relation to their blind or low vision impaired guests.

The following are examples of areas where hotel staff found:

- a. No adjustments are required (as the destination already attends to this area)
 1. Handicap toilets
 2. Elevators
 3. Ramps
- b. Potential minor adjustments are needed
 1. Staff awareness/training
 2. Advertising media
 3. Hotel collateral
 4. Signage
- c. Adjustments should be undertaken in the medium term, however these do not require renovations
 1. Cane detectable features
 2. TGSIs
 3. Tables with round edges
 4. Audible/olfactory indicators
 5. Orientation Champions

- d. Adjustments are required in the longer term / during future renovation or redevelopment
1. Sound dampening materials
 2. Accessible rooms for each room category
 3. Pathways with change in edge texture/contrast
 4. Vision panels at busy doorway areas
 5. Handrails

Provided are five examples of the Shangri-La's facilities where staff believes each area **is** where it should be in terms of accessibility for blind and low vision visitors.



Photo of elevators with Braille



Photo of disabled toilet with Braille

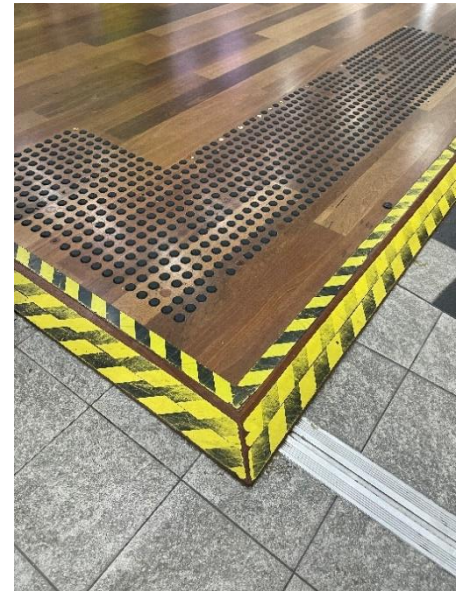


Photo of elevated floor with hi-vis marking



Photo of swimming pool with colour distinction instructions between water and deck



Photo of emergency button with large print

The examples provided below demonstrate five areas of the Shangri-La's facilities where staff believe each area **is not** where it should be in terms of accessibility for blind and low vision visitors and required improvement.



Photo of directional signage without Braille/large print

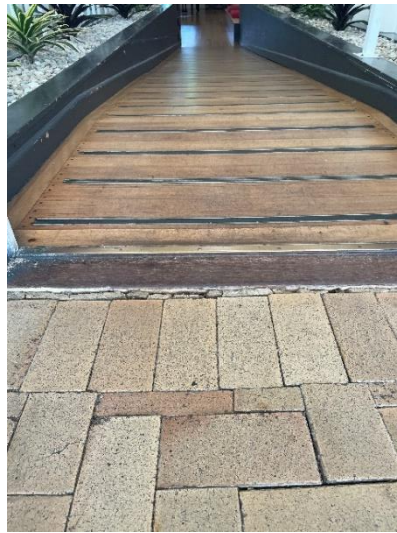


Photo of ramp without even step / no hi-vis marking

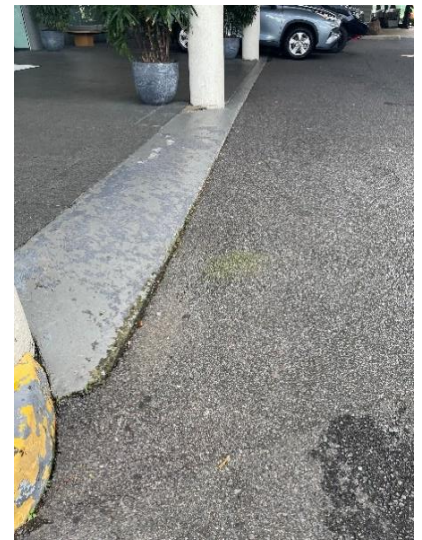


Photo of driveway step without hi-vis marking



Photo of guest room door without Braille identification



Photo of staircase without hi-vis step markings

After consideration of the self-assessment audit findings, Shangri-La Cairns management is considering the following “next steps” that the business will look to undertake to make the destination more accessible and inclusive for visitors who are blind or have low vision.

1. Staff training and awareness
2. Implement safety related features as a priority
3. Make accessibility a key factor in future projects/developments

Shargri-La Carins suggests that provision of the following resources will assist them in their quest to make tourism more accessible for visitors who are blind or have low vision.

- Twin vision collateral for restaurant and hotel information, with tactile QR code linked to audio.

Hotel management know that Braille House can assist with the production of resources, and have reached out to Braille House for assistance.

The Shangri-La Cairns is also appreciative of the Human Guide Training which Braille House consultants are providing to Shangri-La staff.

Through the undertaking of the self-assessment audits, the Shangri-La's leadership team has articulated the following key learnings.

Key Learning 1:

Our property can do much to improve our vision impaired guests. It has been discovered that we have had significant oversight when it comes to vision accessibility.

Key Learning 2:

The majority of our oversight stems from not having vision accessibility as a key factor whilst at the planning stage, whether it be print media or hotel renovation.

The Shangri-La team believe that key benefits arose from engaging with the Self -Assessment Audits. They have reflected that... *The self-assessment audit has opened managements' eyes in terms of catering to our blind or low vision guest's needs. Whilst we are compliant by law, it has been acknowledged that we can do a lot more to improve the quality of our facility in the interest of safety and in the interest of customer satisfaction.*

THANKS to the Shangri-La Cairns team for this participation, feedback and valuable insights,

and

CONGRATULATIONS on your commitment to cater for accessibility and inclusion

for guests who are blind or have low vision.