

CMGT 564 : Strategic Standardization

ANSI A117.1: Cornerstone of U.S. Accessibility Standards Development

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Introduction

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is a landmark civil rights law that both identifies and prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. The Act prohibits discrimination in employment, telecommunications, transportation, access to facilities and programs provided by State and local government entities, and access to the goods and services provided by places of public accommodation such as lodging, health, and recreation facilities. People who design and construct buildings and facilities are responsible under the ADA to make them accessible to and usable by people with disabilities.

Although the ADA is the most comprehensive Federal law protecting the rights of people with disabilities, several important pieces of legislation and accessible design standards helped pave the way for passage of the ADA, beginning with ANSI A117.1.

History of Accessibility Standards

- 1961 ANSI publishes **ANSI A117.1**, Making Buildings Accessible to and Usable by the Physically Handicapped.
- 1965 Congress passes the Vocational Rehabilitation Amendment Act to encourage public facilities to comply with **ANSI A117.1**
- 1980 ANSI publishes a revised version of ANSI A117.1, designated **ANSI A117.1-1980**.
- 1982 U.S. Access Board publishes Minimum Guidelines and Requirements for Accessible Design (MGRAD).
- 1984 Federal ABA rule-making agencies publish Uniform Federal Accessibility Standard (UFAS).
- 1986 ANSI publishes revised version of ANSI A117.1, designated **ANSI A117.1-1986**.
- 1988 Congress passes the Fair Housing Amendments Act (P.L. 100-430).
- 1990 Congress passes the Americans with Disabilities Act (P.L. 101-336).
- 1991 U.S. Access Board publishes Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities (ADAAG).
- 1991 U.S. Departments of Justice and Transportation publish the ADA Standards for Accessible Design.
- 1992 ANSI publishes a revised version of ANSI A117.1, designated **CABO/ANSI A117.1-1992**.
- 1994 ISO publishes ISO TR 9527, technical report on needs of disabled people in buildings
- 1995 Congress passes the Congressional Accountability Act.
- 1998 ANSI publishes a revised version of ANSI A117.1, designated **CABO/ANSI A117.1-1998**.
- 1998 Congress reauthorizes the Rehabilitation Act.

Disability Rights Movement

The Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's gave rise to other civil rights movements, most notably the Women's Rights Movement and the Disability Rights Movement. While minorities and women were protected by civil rights legislation passed by the United States Congress during the 1960's, the rights of people with disabilities were not protected by federal legislation until much later.

The ADA grew out of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's. During that decade, three major pieces of civil rights legislation were passed by the United States Congress. These three major pieces of civil rights legislation are.

1. the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
2. the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and.
3. the Civil Rights Act of 1968 which covers fair housing for minorities.

History of ANSI A117.1

In 1959, the President's Committee on Employment of the Physically Handicapped and the National Society for Crippled Children co-sponsored the development of ANSI A117.1, the first national standard for accessibility.

The technical provisions of ANSI A117.1 are intended for "the design and construction of new buildings and facilities," as well as the "remodeling, alteration, and rehabilitation of existing conditions" (ANSI A117.1, Council of American Building Officials, 1992).

Technical provisions delineate how features should be designed and installed. Technical information in ANSI A117.1 is largely based on anthropometric, ergonomic, and human performance data. ANSI A117.1 does not include scoping provisions, which describe where accessibility is appropriate; when it is required; and what features of a building, facility, or site must be accessible.

ANSI A117.1 was first published in 1961 and reaffirmed without changes in 1971. A completely new and more comprehensive version of ANSI A117.1 was published in 1980. Later editions were published in 1986, 1992, and 1998.

The Influence of ANSI A117.1

ANSI A117.1 is a voluntary standard, it has been adopted as an enforceable code by many State and local agencies that regulate the design and construction of built facilities. The technical requirements in ANSI A117.1 are also referenced in the model building codes established by regional organizations such as the following:

- Building Officials and Code Administrators International (BOCA)
- International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO)
- Southern Building Code Congress International (SBCCI)

Agencies and organizations that reference ANSI A117.1 must establish scoping specifications because the ANSI guidelines contain only technical requirements. ANSI A117.1 has served as the basis for most of the accessibility standards subsequently adopted by Federal and State governments.

ANSI A117.1 Development Procedures

In 1987, the Council of American Building Officials(CABO), the umbrella organization for BOCA, ICBO and SBCCI, assumed Secretariat for the ANSI Accredited Standards Committee to develop standards more compatible with building code format and language.

The CABO/ANSI A117.1 standard is developed through a process that is consistent with procedures developed by ANSI for all voluntary standards. These development procedures follow the Accredited Committee Model, whereby any person, organization, company or government agency with a “direct material interest” in a standard has the right to participate.

Participation includes:

1. Expressing a position on its basis
2. Having the position considered
3. Appealing if adversely affected

ANSI A117.1 Development Procedures

ANSI due process requirements insure:

1. Openness
2. Balance of Interest Categories
3. Written Procedures
4. Appeals
5. Notification
6. Consideration of Views and Objection

Although the process used in the formulation of the revisions is open and democratic, having one's voice heard requires commitment to make proposals in writing

Accessibility Legislation

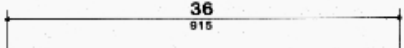
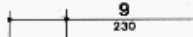
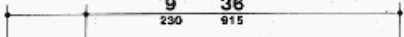

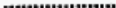

- 1965 **Vocational Rehabilitation Amendment Act (P.L. 89 –333)** passed to encourage public facilities to comply with **ANSI A117.1**
- 1968 **Architectural Barriers Act (ABA)** - the first time physical access to buildings was required by Federal law;initially referenced **ANSI A117.1**
- 1973 **Rehabilitation Act (P.L. 93-112)** is passed by Congress
- 1978 **Sections 502 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-112)** are amended by Congress
- 1990 **Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. 12181)** - prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by public accommodations and requires places of public accommodation and commercial facilities to be designed, constructed, and altered is passed by Congress

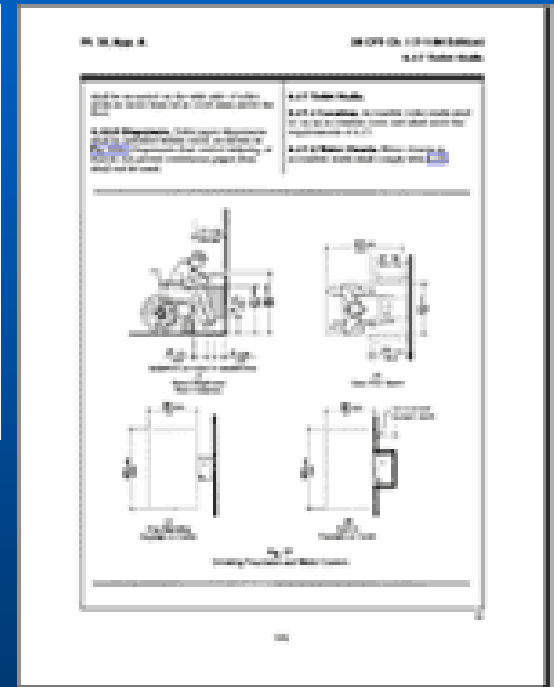
DOJ Code of Federal Regulations

In 1991, the Department of Justice Code of Federal Regulations : Title III (28 CFR Part 36, revised July 1, 1994) is derived to administer the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 in specific reference to the accessibility standards for Public Accommodations and Commercial Facilities.

Parts of DOJ CFR : Title III technical specifications 4.2 through 4.35 are the same as those of the American National Standard Institute's document A117.1-1980. However, sections 4.1.1 through 4.1.7 and sections 5 through 10 are different from ANSI A117.1 in their entirety.

DOJ CFR : Title III – Graphic Conventions

Convention	Description
	Typical dimension line showing U.S. customary units (in inches) above the line and SI units (in millimeters) below
	Dimensions for short distances indicated on extended line
	Dimension line showing alternate dimensions required
	Direction of approach
max	Maximum
min	Minimum
	Boundary of clear floor area
	Centerline



Graphic Conventions

International Code Council

The International Code Council (ICC) was established in 1994 by BOCA, ICBO and SBCCI as a nonprofit organization dedicated to developing a single set of comprehensive and coordinated national model construction codes. The ICC has since taken over from CABO as Secretariat for the ANSI Accredited Standards Committee, issuing the ICC ANSI A117.1 in 1998 and 2003.

Last year, the International Code Council (ICC) launched the three-year cycle to develop the 2008 edition of ICC ANSI A117.1, Standard for Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities. Positions on the proposed changes will be developed by the AIA Codes and Standards Committee to assist AIA representatives to the ANSI committee in their efforts.

ANSI's first committee meeting is currently being held in Washington, D.C., July 24-28, 2006.

Conclusion

Through openness and due process, ANSI standards development has been the backbone of accessibility standards development in the U.S. There is no doubt that the initial establishment of American National Standard ANSI A117.1 in 1961 and its further development by agencies and organizations like CABO and ICC has had an overwhelming effect on the passage of other accessibility standards and legislation, the pinnacle of which being the Americans with Disability Act in 1990.

References

1. Technical Report : Edward Steinfeld, Arch. D. & Danise R. Levine, M. Arch. (1998). **CABO/ANSI A117.1 Standard** (IDEA, University of Buffalo)
2. American National Standard : Council of American Building Officials (1992). **CABO/ANSI A117.1 – 1992 Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities** (ANSI)
3. Online Magazine : American Institute of Architects. (June 2006) **The AIA Angle : Volume 4 Issue 15** (AIA)
4. Technical Report : International Organization for Standardization (9/15/1994). **ISO TR 9257 – Building Construction : Needs of Disabled People in Buildings – Design Guidelines** (ISO)

Questions

