

# PETER DRAPER

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Lifting platform boosts disabled access and OH&S compliance at electorate office**

*13 September 2004*

The Tamworth electorate office of Peter Draper MP will be substantially easier for people with physical disabilities to access following the installation of a wheel chair lifting platform.

The electronic platform, which is located just inside the front door of Mr Draper's Fitzroy St office, enables a person in a wheel chair to drive on, press a button and be raised to the same level as the office floor.

Mr Draper said previously the office was almost impossible for people confined to a wheelchair to enter due to a step up from the footpath and a short flight of stairs inside.

"The options for MP's in the past was to visit disabled constituents at home, at a wheel chair friendly coffee shop or to lay a set of plastic ramps over the stairs which was not practical due to the steep gradient," Mr Draper said.

"It's imperative for people with physical disabilities to have unhindered access to the office and to ensure the office fulfils the requirements of Occupational Health and Safety regulations," Mr Draper said.

Mr Draper praised the effort and initiative of the building's landlord, John Turnbull, who conducted a great deal of research to find a suitable option and invested about \$20,000 to purchase and install the platform which is manufactured in Denmark.

Mr Turnbull, who purchased the building 12 months ago, said the model of lifting platform chosen was one of the first to be installed in country NSW and a worthwhile investment.

He believes the platform has the potential for wider application to other business premises due to its lifting capacity and the fact it occupies a small area of space.

The NSW WorkCover Authority and the Tamworth and District Chamber of Commerce acknowledged Mr Turnbull's efforts to address compliance issues and improve disability access as setting a good example.

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With renovations to upgrade security for staff in the office now complete, Mr Draper will hold a morning tea to mark the completion of work and to launch the platform.

**Photo opportunity:** WorkCover NSW district co-ordinator Russell Webb, Tamworth and District Chamber of Commerce and Industry general manager Max Cathcart and Challenge Disability Services vocational and client services manager Peter Dunstan will join Mr Draper and Mr Turnbull in the electorate office at a morning tea to launch the lifting platform on Monday, September 13, at 10.30am.

**Media welcome to attend**

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