

# Accessibility committee meeting

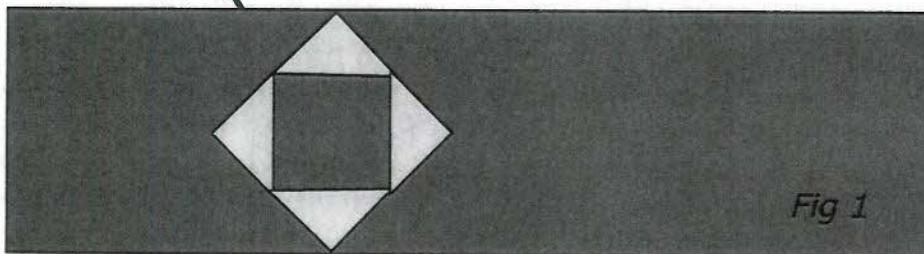
## *Preliminary findings*

July 13, 2011

I conducted a tour the SOVI with the group of people from the accessibility committee, some with challenges; sight, hearing or mobility impairments. The following limitations on board the vessel(s) were noted from them regarding the current set-up, layout of the SOVI's passenger areas.

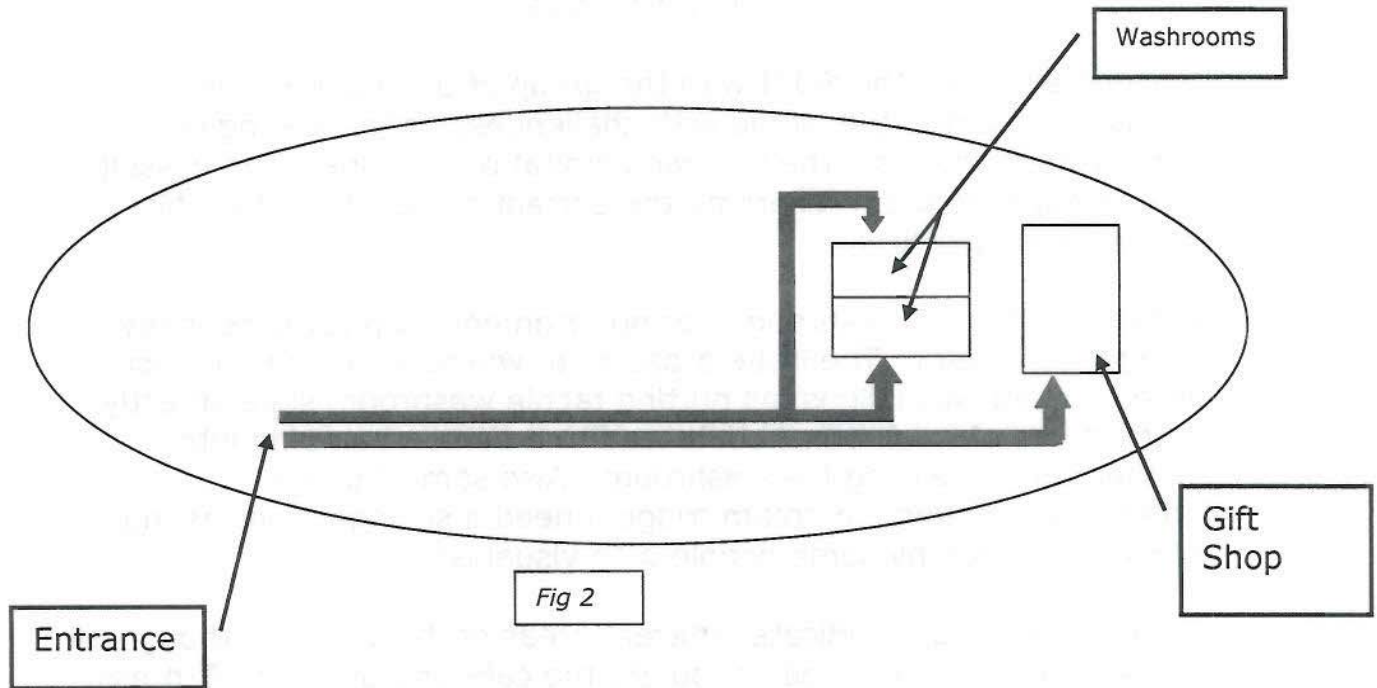
No tactile signs for washrooms, or other amenities [elevators, baby change rooms etc]. The issue arose as to where would be the best place to locate such signs, as putting tactile washroom signs directly on the doors of washrooms could lead to a person bumping into another person leaving the washroom. Also some signage (milk/cream stickers on cream fridges) need a stronger contrasting colour to be seen by some people with visual issues.

No tactile flooring to indicate different areas of the vessel, although all hallways are hard surfaced so too are the cafeteria and Café Express. The Buffet offered the best flooring as it indicated where the food was (tarquette) and carpeting for the table areas. It was also noted that the colour scheme was challenging for those with sight/colour challenges. i.e. the chairs in the A lounge are similar in colour to the carpet, making the chairs seem 'invisible'. They suggest contrasting colours or patterned chairs. Another interesting note was that the floor design can seem like a deep hole to vision impaired people [see *fig 1*]



Hearing impaired had big issues with the PA system, saying they can not understand them. Suggestion was the use of 'lots' of TVs with white on black captioning. Also suggested that the TV's play the 'Welcome aboard/safety messages'. A side bar issue is that we can play our advertising on them as well as normal TV fare.

Wayfinding signage could include the use of coloured lines/arrows marked on the floors. See fig 2



Red line = washrooms, pink = Gift Shop etc.

They liked the wide passageways on the SOVI

There was discussion regarding the handicapped washrooms, they didn't mind having them located in the main washrooms as long as there was at least one separate for people who have people of the opposite sex assisting them. This may also be designated as a family washroom [wheel chair accessible, change table etc]. We would lose space in the main washrooms but gain space from losing one of the designated handicapped washrooms.

Some areas of the vessel didn't have very good/strong lighting. Areas like outside the men's washroom in B lounge, by the phones (Deck-6). Anywhere there wasn't a large window to the outside was dim.

The children's play area that is currently designated the wheelchair / disabled people's area in the event of an emergency but has no signage to indicate same. Nor any signage anywhere else in the ship to indicate where the area is. May need more discussion, is it really an

area of refuge, or is it just a meeting area in the event of an emergency.

Issue in the Seawest is the height of the food/drink counter. People in wheel chairs can not reach most items on the counter, especially items like hot coffee and hot water. May need to look at a stepped counter, one at 36" high (as it is now) and a stepped one in front of it at 30" or 32" height. This may cause problems with crew having to reach over and down to replenish trays of food. Curious note is that all the wheel chair people mentioned that they have never been in the Seawest, don't want to pay the money. The condiment counter in the Seawest was too deep, with everything pushed to the back, for anyone in a wheel chair to reach. This could be solved by putting a spacer in the back to move everything forward but would limit counter space for people to put their plates of food and drink down while they get forks etc.

The last issue was wheelchair bound people not being able to reach the serving counter on the steam table to reach their food orders. This may be more difficult to address, no suggestions came forward except to lower it. Lowering it would change the whole dynamic of the steam table itself.