COPY REVIEW STAFF: FYI
HANDRAILS — 1½ NOMINAL
IS ACCEPTABLE -
~~1.660~~ ACTUAL O.D. IS
≈ 1.9"

United States
Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board

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October 16, 1992

Mr. Anthony Leto
Assistant Treasurer
Julius Blum and Company, Inc.
Post Office Box 816
Carlstadt, New Jersey 0702

Dear Mr. Leto:

This is to confirm that the Access Board has been informing persons who request technical assistance regarding the requirements for handrail size in section 4.26.2 of the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) that standard pipe sizes designated by the industry as 1-1/4 inch to 1-1/2 inch are acceptable for purposes of that section.

You should be aware that although the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) authorizes the Access Board to provide technical assistance with respect to ADAAG, the Department of Justice is responsible for enforcement of certain titles of the Act. This letter provides informal guidance only. It is not a determination of your legal rights or responsibilities under the ADA and is not binding on the Access Board or the Department of Justice.

Sincerely,

James J. Raggio

James J. Raggio
General Counsel

cc: Philip L. Breen
Public Access Section
Department of Justice

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placement of handrails which are too low, according to research. Clearly, specific guidance is needed to correct this situation.

With respect to handrail shape or configuration, the Board is not aware of any problems with either curved or vertical handrails, provided they move in tandem with the platform. Therefore, the provision has been revised to remove any explicit reference to diagonal or horizontal configuration. Further, the usable length has been changed from 12 inches to 8 inches so that a vertical handrail between the mounting height limits would not be precluded. Handrails which extend above or below the limits are permitted, provided a usable segment is provided within the limits.

As for handrail diameter, the requirements in § 1192.23(b)(13) are consistent with the White Book. Also, the Board sponsored hand anthropometrics research project tested gripping by persons with various hand disabilities and confirmed the appropriateness of the specified dimensions. A 1 inch diameter handrail would not be usable. The Board notes that most vehicle handrails are made of pipe. In the building industry, pipe size typically specifies inside diameter so that a 1½ inch pipe handrail actually has a larger outside diameter, sometimes up to 2 inches. Such handrails have not posed any known problem. Thus, the 1½ inch diameter requirement can result in a handrail of approximately 2 inches under current building industry practices. The 1½ inch clearance also received general support and has been included in § 1192.23(b)(13).

It is critical that more than one handrail be provided if standees are to be able to use the lift. The presence of two handrails is also critical for rotary lifts. However, because of the design of rotary lifts, it may be that a suitable configuration can be achieved with handrails that are not necessarily on opposite sides of the platform. Accordingly § 1192.23(b)(13) has been modified to specify handrails on "two sides" rather than "both sides" of the platform. The performance criterion that the handrails be usable throughout the

from 600 pounds to 750 pounds.

Response: Since ramps are perm in some cases instead of lifts, it is essential that they be designed to accommodate the same range of common wheelchairs and mobility The 600 pound design load has be retained for ramps 30 inches or lo Since ramps shorter than 30 inche to support only about half the wei a wheelchair or other mobility aid given point, a 300 pound design lo specified for shorter ramps.

Comment. Two commenters req clarification on the requirement fo "continuous surface" in § 1192.23(and wanted to know if it excluded expanded metal platforms.

Response. The term "continuous surface" was used instead of "soli surface" to mean a single, uninter surface from edge to edge as oppo a platform with a gap in the middl may incorporate steps. It was also intended to preclude the use of tw separate ramps placed some dista apart. Those configurations can accommodate four wheeled device cannot accommodate three wheel scooters. Ramps having two parts permitted, provided they are desig be deployed together to provide a uniform, uninterrupted surface. Th was not intended to preclude expa metal ramps which are often much lighter than solid platforms of the s strength.

Comment. Two manufacturers a two other commenters supported t requirement in § 1192.23(c)(3) rega ramp threshold. Two operators suggested that a threshold be ⅜ in

Response. Since the requirement § 1192.23(c)(3) is based on commor accessibility standards and two manufacturers said that it was eas achievable, the Board has not cha the provision. The operators who suggested a ⅜ inch threshold seem have been concerned about existi equipment which is not affected b these guidelines.

Comment. APTA and a manufac said the height of side barriers in § 1192.23(c)(4) should depend on t length of the ramp. One operator s that it used a short bridge plate wi because of its placement between posts, limited lateral movement of

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