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To Standards New Zealand

Please find attached DPA’s submission on Public Consultation: DZ 4514, Interconnected Smoke Alarms for Houses.

## Disabled Persons Assembly NZ

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# Introducing Disabled Persons Assembly NZ

The Disabled Persons Assembly NZ (DPA) is a pan-disability disabled person’s organisation that works to realise an equitable society, where all disabled people (of all impairment types and including women, Māori, Pasifika, young people) are able to direct their own lives. DPA works to improve social indicators for disabled people and for disabled people be recognised as valued members of society. DPA and its members work with the wider disability community, other DPOs, government agencies, service providers, international disability organisations, and the public by:

* telling our stories and identifying systemic barriers
* developing and advocating for solutions
* celebrating innovation and good practice

# The submission

DPA supports the revision of the standard DZ 4514. We are relieved that this revision finally includes provisions for visual/tactile alerting for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing. In our view these changes are long overdue.

# Right to Safety

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) (UNCRPD), articles 3, 4, 9, 10 and 14, affirm the rights of disabled people to participate and access society on an equal basis to others, including our right to life and security of person.

The provision of visual/tactile alerting features for interconnected smoke alarms in homes is essential for the safety of people who cannot hear auditory smoke alarms and their omission from previous standards placed them at greater risk.

The purpose of a smoke alarm is to alert you to a fire in time so that you can get out of your home or building safely. A fire that develops at night, when people are asleep, is particularly dangerous for Deaf/hard of hearing people, since most Deaf/hard of hearing people will take out their hearing aid or cochlear implant (if they use one) to sleep. This means that they will not be alerted to a fire by an auditory alarm, even one that is significantly louder than normal.

All too often Deaf/hard of hearing people end up relying on the presence of hearing people in the home or building to alert them to a smoke alarm. When visual/tactile smoke alarms are installed, it is essential that these are correctly placed so that they can work as designed.

While we understand that Standards New Zealand have no influence over the Building Code, we will be approaching MBIE to make the sections of the Building Code which relate to this standard mandatory.