

**June 2006**

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### **Chairs for Heavy People**

The existing Australian Standard AS/NZS 4438 'Height Adjustable Swivel Chairs' has the following Durability Level Applications:

Level 4 Chairs for office, general keyboard and executive use

Level 5 Chairs for heavy duty office, industrial and similar applications

Level 6 Chairs for extremely severe conditions of use such as police stations, military installations, control rooms and heavy industrial.

One flaw with these descriptions is that they don't explicitly state safe working loads in terms of the maximum masses of people for whom the chairs at each level are intended.

There are two 'new' standards that do viz., AS/NZS 5031.1 and ISO 21015. These are severe testing regimes.

These standards are not just 'taking a AS/NZS 4438 level 6 chair for a bit of an extra ride'. The tests subject the com-

ponents to significantly higher loads for many more cycles than AS/NZS 4438 at any test level.

**AS/NZS 5031.1** 'Office pedestal seating for use by persons weighing up to 150 kg and for use up to 24 hours a day'.

This is based on BS 5459.2 with relevant additions. Furntech-AFRDI is already testing to this standard and you will see some chairs already certified to this standard on our web site.

Its timeline is in the hands of Standards Australia, but when the AS is issued there will no doubt be a demand for chairs to this Standard.

**ISO 21015** 'Office work chair – test methods for the determination of stability, strength and durability'.

It is strictly speaking not yet a standard. It exists in draft form and the results of the most recent ballot will be discussed at the next ISO meeting in the USA this

month. We are representing Standards Australia at this meeting.

ISO 21015 gives you the opportunity to 'dial-up' what loads and usage you want. For example 170 kg and 8/5 or 180 kg and 16/5 or 165 kg and 24/7 or whatever you want really. The chair would then be certified at this level, and as you can see it can take things to a level above 5031.1 and almost as importantly to a level below in terms of durability (if you do not want 24/7).

On the basis of what we know today on the draft ISO we are offering to test to this (ISO/DIS 21015). Of course, if the draft changes, then these changes whatever they are, may require some tests to be revisited. The ISO is likely to become an AS sometime in the future under Standards Australia protocols of standards harmonization.

If you wish to discuss testing to either of the above please contact us on 03 6326 6155 or [info@furntech.org.au](mailto:info@furntech.org.au)



### **AFRDI 109 'Components for Chairs'**

AS/NZS 4438 has a requirement that critical chair components – castors, bases, gas struts seat mechanisms etc - be compliant with AFRDI 109 'Components for chairs'. To assist component suppliers to provide assurance that their components will be suitable for use in both normal and heavy duty chairs Furntech is currently revising AFRDI 109 and looking at establishing testing requirements for components for heavy duty chairs. We are also extending the range of tests available to include backrests, seat pans and arm rests.



### **Confusion on AS 3590.2:1990**

AS 3590.2 'Screen-based workstations – workstation furniture' was published in 1990 and whilst it covers desks and

workstations and contains valid guidelines for the ergonomic use of visual display units AS 3590.2 also refers to chairs.

It is important to clarify what the current situation is.

Where conflicts occur within standards such as AS/NZS 4438, AS/NZS 4442, AS/NZS 4443, and AS/NZS 4688 these shall take precedence over AS 3590.2.

We are working to have AS 3590.2 revised so that this anomaly is removed. If you require further information to assist in your tenders and quotes please contact us immediately.



### **Bed and Mattress Standard**

An Australian Standard for beds and mattresses is under development. The standard covers the following elements

- a) bed base strength and durability BS EN 1725
- b) mattress hardness and resilience (based on BS EN 1957) and
- c) mattress flammability (based on BS 7177)

The standard is currently at the CD (Committee Draft) stage and when agreed will be released as a draft for public comment.



### **New AS for Retail Display Devices (spinners)**

A new Australian Standard AS 4829:2006 covering retail display devices or spinners has recently been released by Standards Australia. Furntech-AFRDI is offering a testing and certification program for these units. Details can be obtained by contacting us at [info@furntech.org.au](mailto:info@furntech.org.au) or 03 6326 6155.



## **New Cot Consumer Protection Notice (CPN)**

CPN No 6 was released in November 2005 and CPN No 10 of 2003 was revoked. However, this new CPN has an allowance for compliance via a path effectively equivalent to CPN No 10 of 2003 that will be available until 1 November 2006. Changes to the requirements for compliance under CPN No 6 of 2005 are generally small and it is likely that cots that were compliant with CPN No 10 of 2003 will also be compliant with the new CPN. However, to ensure ongoing compliance cots will need to be reassessed and we will be notifying clients about the process later this month.



## **AFRDI releases Leather Standard**

To assist consumers in their purchase of leather furniture AFRDI's Leather Standard has recently been released, ('AFRDI Standard 146 Leather Descriptions, Furniture Industry')

The Standard requires the leather meet certain test requirements as well as requiring details be clearly displayed at the point of sale.

Copies of the Standard may be purchased by contacting us at [info@furntech.org.au](mailto:info@furntech.org.au) or 03 6326 6155.

AFRDI is also offering a testing and certification service for leather and details are available on our web site or by contacting the Institute as above.

In addition, we are offering a service whereby tests can be conducted on an individual batch of product to ensure ongoing compliance.



## **Glass in Furniture Standard nearer**

Public comment on DR 05549 closed on 31 January 2006. This standard provides general requirements for the selection of glass that is suitable for use in furniture to ensure reasonable safety. The

Australian Standards Committee BD 07 will now review comments received.



## **AS/NZS 4220 'Bunk Beds'**

Issues have been raised relating to the interpretation of this Standard in relation to snag points and head entrapments formed by what have been referred to as "reducing configurations" on bunk beds. Standards Australia committee CS 003 have formed a subcommittee which is currently reviewing these questions in an attempt to find unambiguous definitions and tests which will more effectively distinguish between potentially dangerous and safer bunks. Furntech-AFRDI has representation on CS 003 and would welcome any comment or suggestions, which might help to clarify and expedite this process.



## **AS/NZS 2172 'Cots for Household Use – Safety Requirements'**

Similarly, issues have been raised relating to the interpretation of this Standard in relation to snag points formed by protrusions or gaps on cots. Standards Australia committee CS 003 have formed another subcommittee which is currently reviewing these questions also in an attempt to find unambiguous definitions and tests, which will more effectively distinguish between potentially dangerous and safer cots. We would again welcome any comment or suggestions.



## Sustainability

AFRDI has initiated a project to develop a Sustainability Standard for Furniture. Details can be found on our web site.



## Discounts

Furntech offer a 10% discount on most testing to CFIAA, FIAA and INPAA members. Becoming an AFRDI Member can attain further discounts.

Please contact the Institute on 03 6326 6155 or [info@furntech.org.au](mailto:info@furntech.org.au) if you would like more information or wish to become an AFRDI Member.

The combination of industry association and AFRDI membership can yield discounts of up to 30%.



## Comments Welcome

The Institute would welcome comments on any of the above topics. You can contact us on [info@furntech.org.au](mailto:info@furntech.org.au)



## New Furntech-AFRDI Members

We would like to welcome the following new members: -

Durostone Pty Ltd

The Office Seating Company Pty Ltd

In addition we would like to thank those members who have recently renewed their membership.



## What is Furntech-AFRDI Blue Tick?

Blue Tick is an undertaking where manufacturers or suppliers of furniture or components submit their products for testing and quality certification to recognised Standards. Companies whose products meet these requirements are listed on the Furntech-AFRDI website ([www.furntech.org.au](http://www.furntech.org.au)) which is used by many specifiers, manufacturers, buyers and sellers of furniture. Further details on Blue Tick may be found on our website or by contacting the Institute.



Blue Tick  
Product  
Certification