

Industry Alert

On 1 May 2023 the National Construction Code (NCC) was adopted, enforcing provisions of AS1288:2021 Glass in Buildings – selection and installation.

The new standard has wide ranging implications as to selection and installation of glass balustrade. For some time now, our suppliers and their retained engineers have sought clarity from government bodies/authorities on a number of provisions in AS1288:2021. To date, they have not received clarification on matters raised but will continue attempts.

Below are some important points having regard to **Section 7 of AS1288:2021 – Barriers or Balustrade**

*(** NOTE: below is at commentary/guide only and is not to be relied on as advice: seek independent engineer or government advice as required)*

- Laminated glass must be used for balustrades 5 metres or above the ground (section 7.4.1)
 - Under 5 metres, monolithic toughened glass may be used if provisions of section 7.4.5 are satisfied
 - Importantly, the advice from engineers that the standard does not allow SPIGOTS or POINT FIXINGS to be installed with 12mm monolithic toughened safety glass above 1 metre from the ground. This advice is made having regard to a reading of sections 7.4.1, 7.4.5 and 7.4.6. The advice received is spigots can only be installed in a balustrade installation above 1 metre from the ground using toughened laminated glass.
 - In relation to 'dry glaze' channels, our supplier has sought engineer advice to clarify section 7.4.5 which specifically references 'grouted channel'. Engineer advice is that 'dry glaze' channels (utilising clamping actions similar to spigot friction fitting) should NOT be installed with 12mm monolithic toughened safety glass above 1 metre from the ground. Toughened laminated glass should be used. Government/industry clarification has been sought but clarification has not been provided to date.
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** with the new standard, the industry working presumption has been that under 5 meters from the ground that 12mm monolithic toughened glass could continue to be used with spigots, point fixings and channel systems (assuming appropriate load testing of a complete system and engineer certification). Despite this working presumption, current engineer advice is the new standard does not clearly prescribe this and as such, government/industry body clarification relating to interpretation of the standard is required. We continue to seek clarification and are hopeful that information will be forthcoming from government/industry bodies.
- **Each and every glass balustrade installation will require independent site-specific engineering** – we are seeking engineering clarification on number of matters which are still unresolved. As such and until further notice, please seek independent engineering for each glass balustrade job.
 - For works started on a job or if building approval/permits were provided before 1 May 2023, the application of the previous AS1288 standard may apply – that said, it is imperative that the building certifier is contacted to seek clarity as each situation is site specific and no 'catch all' advice can be provided.

For now, please seek independent engineering advice for all glass balustrade installations as from 1 May 2023 and if works relate to approvals/commencements prior to 1 May 2023, seek advice from the certifier as to which AS1288 standard applies.