

Mandatory safety standards

Certain consumer goods or product-related services are produced under what is called a 'mandatory safety standard'. This means that the product must meet certain safety criteria before it can be sold in Australia. For example, the top bunk of a bunk bed must have a safety railing which is at least 260mm above the mattress.

A mandatory safety standard for a consumer good can specify:

- the way the good is made
- what it contains
- how it works
- what tests it needs to pass
- whether any warnings or instructions need to accompany the good.

A mandatory safety standard for a product-related service can specify:

- how the services are supplied
- the skills or qualifications of a person supplying the service
- the materials used
- the tests these materials must pass.

Some consumer goods or product-related services have an information standard applied to them, requiring that certain information is provided to you about it.

For example, information standards apply to ingredient labelling for cosmetics, labelling for tobacco products and care labelling for clothing and textile products.

All mandatory safety standards and information standards are listed on the Product Safety Australia website at www.productsafety.gov.au

More resources

Our role is to ensure that the products you use are as safe as possible and inform you about using products safely.

We conduct product safety awareness activities in a number of areas including:

- common household items like treadmills and blind cords
- children's toys and clothing
- household furniture like bunk beds and portable cots.

Resources are available to download or order from www.productsafety.gov.au

Further information

If you would like to learn more about product safety, *Product safety – a guide for business and legal practitioners* offers more detailed information. The guide has been designed to help businesses, legal practitioners and consumer advocates understand the law. The guide, and other information, is available to download from the Australian Consumer Law website at www.consumerlaw.gov.au



Contact us

Consumer and Business Services

Website: www.cbs.sa.gov.au

Telephone: 131 882

For hearing or speech impairment, call the National Relay Service on 13 36 77.

For interpreting and translations services, call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 13 14 50.

A joint initiative of the Australian, state and territory governments

Product safety

A guide for consumers



Government of South Australia
Attorney-General's Department



Product safety

A guide for consumers

National product safety regime

Under the Australian Consumer Law, Australia has a national product safety regime.

Australian governments are able to:

- issue safety warning statements
- ban products, either temporarily or permanently
- impose mandatory safety standards
- issue compulsory recall notices, requiring businesses to recall a product
- impose information standards, requiring that certain information about a product be provided to you when you buy it.

The regime covers consumer goods, which are intended to be or are likely to be for personal, domestic or household use. It also covers product-related services for the installation, maintenance, repair, cleaning, assembly or delivery of consumer goods.



Safety warning notices

A safety warning notice will be issued to warn the public that a good or service is under investigation or poses a safety risk.

The safety warning notice will:

- state certain goods or product-related services are under investigation to determine whether they may injure someone
- warn of possible risks in using the goods or product-related services.

If you see a safety warning notice about a good or service that you have purchased, it is important that you follow the advice provided. Some safety warning notices will tell you how to use (or not misuse) the product or service to avoid injury.

All safety warning notices are listed on the Product Safety Australia website at www.productsafety.gov.au

Recalls

A product can be recalled if it:

- may cause injury
- does not comply with a safety standard
- is banned.

A recall can either be compulsory, as imposed by the government, or it can be a voluntary recall by the business or supplier selling the product.

If you have bought a product that is recalled, you should follow the instructions in the recall notice. You may need to return the product to get it repaired or refunded.

All recall information is available from the Product Safety Recalls Australia website at www.recalls.gov.au



Bans

Bans can be placed on consumer goods or product related services if there is evidence of the risk of serious injury, illness or death associated with it. The ban can be an interim ban or a permanent one.

A ban on a consumer good makes it unlawful for anyone, in trade or commerce, to:

- supply it
- offer to supply it
- manufacture it
- possess it
- have control of it.

A ban on a product-related service makes it unlawful for anyone, in trade or commerce, to supply or offer to supply that service.

All bans are listed on the Product Safety Australia website at www.productsafety.gov.au