



March 2015

SWEP Update

Changes effective 1 April 2015

SWEP is committed to the efficient supply of safe and quality equipment for our clients.

Products must meet Australian Standards or equivalent

As part of the Department of Human Services Victorian Aids and Equipment Program Guidelines one of the key objectives outlined in the guidelines is to provide high quality aids and equipment that comply with relevant Australian standards (where applicable)¹

From 1st April, 2015 SWEP will require all suppliers to state on their quotations that the quoted items meet the relevant Australian Standard or equivalent.

What are Australian standards?

Australian standards have been developed to define recognised safety and reliability criteria. To state that a piece of equipment is 'compliant with Australian Standards' the item must be put through a series of tests. These tests are intended to replicate situations that are likely to occur when the equipment is in use. For example wheelchairs are tested for their safety at different speeds, gradients, road surfaces and user weights.

Testing a piece of equipment, and the issue of a certificate of compliance, provides a sense of satisfaction and reassurance that the item is safe to be used and will perform safely and effectively. Standards also allow for fair comparisons to be made between different items of equipment, and are used by some purchasing authorities in the public sector as a minimum requirement. Australian Standards are often closely related to other nations standards, and to international standards, though differ where Australian circumstances impose particular needs.²

1 Department of Human Services Victorian Aids and Equipment Program Guidelines February, 2010
2 <http://www.novitatech.org.au/> viewed 4 March, 2015



What Standards are applicable for AT?

The following websites provide detailed information around Australian Standards:

Standards Australia www.standards.org.au

Information about Australian Standards can be located on this website. Compliance with Australian (AS) or joint Australian/New Zealand (AS/NZS) Standards may be voluntary or mandatory. Mandatory standards are law and there are penalties for supplying products that do not comply with them.

Third party certification, inspection and testing bodies assess whether a product conforms to an Australian Standard. See www.productsafety.gov.au for a list of mandatory standards and information on product testing.

SAI Global www.saiglobal.com

Current, draft and withdrawn Australian standards issued by Standards Australia are available online from the SAI Global database. International standards are also included. The Standards can be purchased through the SAI Global InfoStore.

For information on requirements that apply to imported products see www.Australia.gov.au

Standards Testing Bodies

Novitatech (disability equipment)

Novitatech is an organisation that performs standards testing and provides a standards compliance list on their website. The equipment from the following product categories have been tested: elbow crutches, electric wheelchairs, manual wheelchairs, patient lifters, prosthetics, ramps, rollators, scooters, shower / toilet seats, walking frames.

Website: <http://www.novitatech.org.au/>

Furntech (furniture)

Furntech is an independent not-for-profit technical organisation providing standards, testing, product certification and research for buyers and sellers of furniture.

Website: <http://www.furntech.org.au/>

Partial / Conditional Compliance

We are gaining additional advice about products that have conditional compliance or partially comply with standards. SWEP will provide further updates as they arise.



Required Action: Prescriber

Prescribers will need to ensure that quotations for non-contracted items included in their client applications have clearly indicated that all relevant standards are met. It is important that prescribers only recommend equipment that meets Australian Standards or equivalent if a standard is applicable for that equipment type.

SWEP will liaise with prescribers if this information is missing.

Required Action: Supplier

All quotes provided to SWEP using either the standardised quotation template or an individual business quote must include all SWEP quote requirements, including standards compliance where applicable.

If this information is not received, SWEP will follow up with the supplier to confirm. If the product does not meet a required standard, SWEP will not be in a position to purchase the quoted items.

Contracted Equipment

All equipment from the Non-customised Aids and Equipment Tender went through a detailed process to ensure that items met relevant standards; therefore if a tendered item is being quoted there is no requirement to confirm standards.

Standardised Quotes and FAQs

Amended quotations and FAQs will be available on the SWEP website <http://swep.bhs.org.au>

If you wish to provide any feedback about these changes, please contact us on 1300 747 937.