



AFRDI Information Kit on Testing Office Desks, Office Workstations, and Tables that can be used as Office Desks

1 Standard

The Australian and New Zealand AS/NZS 4442:2018 *Office desks, office workstations and tables intended to be used as office desks—Mechanical, dimensional and general requirements and test methods* is the Standard that specifies minimum requirements for dimensions, general safety, stability, strength and durability of office desks, office workstations, and office tables that can be used as desks (hence forth referred to as desks).

This Standard is applicable to desks with either fixed height or height adjustable worktops, and to single desks, desking systems, and panel systems provided they possess a primary worktop intended to be used for office work. The testing of flip top worktops, and storage components attached to a desk are also covered by this standard. The testing of seating that is attached to a desk, e.g. as in an integrated system, is also covered by this standard.

2 Test Levels

Unlike the standard for office chairs, AS/NZS 4442:2018 does not have test levels. Specifiers may set harder or less rigorous tests but it is considered that the Australian Standard provides sufficient assurance that the products will provide good service over and beyond a 'reasonable' life.

3 Ranges

If required by the client, Furntech can conduct the testing necessary to cover a whole desk range/system.

Where variation across a range/system is large, testing of each individual configuration may be impracticable. In such cases the weakest or worst-case unit(s) or configuration(s) may be tested to indicate general conformance of the system as a whole. Furntech will need to determine the worst-case unit(s) of a system.

4 Product categories

There are 5 major product categories:

- Fixed height sitting desks
- Fixed height standing desks
- Height adjustable sitting desks
- Height adjustable standing desks
- Sit-to-stand desks

Products will be certified to reflect the category that AFRDI deems best describes them.

5 Certification requirements

All certified product will need to be approved–**at minimum**–for general safety, strength and durability and stability.

On top of that there are three hierarchical categories of dimensional 'approval'.

1. Dimensional compliance.
2. Minor dimensional variation.
3. Dimensional non-compliance.

Overall when combining all requirements i.e. general safety, strength and durability, stability and dimensions, qualitatively there are three levels of certification, from top to bottom:

1. General safety, strength and durability, stability, and dimensional compliance.
2. General safety, strength and durability, and stability compliance, and minor dimensional variation.
3. General safety, strength and durability, and stability compliance, and dimensional non-compliance.

NB Fixed height standing desks cannot achieve dimensional compliance as they are categorically excluded from this status by the standard i.e. they are not considered to be able to be set at a height suitable to cover a sufficient range of statures to be considered ergonomic (in a population sense). However, they may be suitable for an individual or individuals with a narrow range of heights and therefore can be certified, but only as dimensionally non-compliant.

Minor dimensional variation applies in cases where an otherwise well designed safe, strong, durable, and stable product does not quite achieve dimensional compliance, but does so in such a way that in the great majority of circumstances it would be of little significance.

Dimensionally non-compliant may mean a number of things but does not necessarily mean a product is not ergonomic in terms of its design intent. For example, a desk may be designed specifically for very tall or very short people and be perfectly appropriate for those segments of the population, but be outside the height ranges specified in the standard. The reason it would be certified as dimensionally non-compliant is simply that to achieve compliance—in terms of the standard—a product must be suitable for a wide range of the population of potential users (nominally from the 5 %ile to the 95 %ile).

Another reason for dimensional non-compliance may be that the product is a fixed height standing desk. Again, it may be perfectly suitable for a specific user, or a narrow range of users, but would not be considered suitable for the general population. However, if, in an office environment, a number of fixed height standing desks were available at a range of different heights, the problem of dealing with a large range of users with different statures would be effectively solved.

Dimensional non-compliance may also simply be the result of consumer demand. If buyers want to match existing product, or like a particular style of non-conforming desk, so long as they are happy and understand what they're buying there's no problem.

Another point to consider is that a desk that does actually meet the dimensional requirements of the standard may not, in all circumstances, be an appropriate ergonomic solution e.g. it may not be suitable for people who are either extremely tall or short. Further, a particular type of desk may not be appropriate as the sole 'working surface'. Take, for example, a height adjustable standing desk. If this was the only desk available, although it would be able to be set at different heights for people of different statures—which is obviously good—not being able to sit down at all for long periods of work is not ideal. However, this problem may be overcome with the provision of an appropriate height adjustable seat, which serves to illustrate the point that ergonomic solutions require some amount of thought and are not just about simple compliance.

6 Confidentiality

Testing conducted at Furntech is absolutely confidential. The Institute's procedures prohibit the disclosure of the fact that an item is being tested and the results of any such testing without the express permission in writing of the person who signed the Testing Request form.

To assist us to preserve the confidentiality of other customers, we require three working days notice of an intended visit to the Institute's laboratory.

7 Costs

The cost of testing to AS/NZS 4442:2018 depends on the nature of the product and the degree of variation in a range.

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To enable Furntech to calculate the testing cost a company will need to provide Furntech with technical detail of the product, including the extent of the range to be covered, e.g. sales brochures can have sufficient detail to enable quoting.

While every effort is made to keep to the quoted figure, if on receipt of the test sample it is found that the product differs to that which the quotation was based then it may be necessary to revise the quoted amount either up or down.

Typically the quotation will include the cost of product certification under the AFRDI Blue Tick Program for a period of three years and freight between the closest Furntech depot and our laboratory.

If tests have to be repeated due to failure, a further charge will be made for reassembling the sample and repeating the tests, and for freight if our freight system is used to deliver replacement samples and/or parts.

Prices are subject to 10% GST.

NOTES:

Member Discounts

Furntech members receive discounts on testing and research fees. Information on Furntech membership is available from the Institute and our [website](#).

Worktops

All desk test samples must have worktops included otherwise testing can not commence.

Electric desks

Electrical safety and electrical compliance with regulations is not covered by the scope of AS/NZS 4442:2018, nor AFRDI certification.

Formaldehyde

One of the general safety requirements included in the new standard is that panel products made from reconstituted wood (e.g. MDF, particle board, compact laminate and similar) must be E1 equivalent (or better).

8 Payment

Furntech policy is that **PAYMENT MUST BE MADE BEFORE TESTING COMMENCES**. After receiving a quote please phone 03 6326 6155 to request an invoice to facilitate payment. Facilities are available for payment by Visa and MasterCard.

In the event that this product fails the assessment or the assessment is terminated at the owner's request, a credit towards future charges, available for a period of 3 years from the date of engagement, will be issued for the unused portion of the assessment fee.

9 Freight

Refer to the Institute's [Information Kit on Freight to Furntech-AFRDI](#). Distribution of this Kit in hardcopy form will include the freight-related information as a supplementary sheet.

10 Timing

Freight normally takes between 7 and 14 days. The time required for testing will depend on availability of equipment, but would typically be between three to four weeks.

When the sample, the Testing Request form and payment are all received, the item will be placed on the testing schedule and an estimated completion date supplied.

11 AFRDI Blue Tick Certification

AFRDI Blue Tick certification is open to suppliers whose products meet the required standard. The concept is that for Furntech to endorse a product, the Institute needs to have an on-going contractual relationship with the supplier that ensures purchasers can rely on certificates of endorsement. Monitoring may involve random audits and the investigation of complaints arising from the sale of endorsed products.

Under the AFRDI Blue Tick product certification program, suppliers agree to

- maintain quality of production to at least that of the sample tested;
- advise of changes in the product including changes in materials, components and means and place of manufacture **prior** to these changes taking place;
- not use (nor permit its agents to use) the logo to promote goods which are not covered by the agreement or to misrepresent the nature of Furntech's endorsement;
- keep and make available a register of complaints arising from the sale of goods covered by the agreement;
- submit goods for retesting every three years, or as necessary when standards change;
- agree to random checks of the quality of products covered by the agreement;
- maintain an adequate product liability insurance cover; and
- pay a monitoring fee - the monitoring fee is included in the certification charge.

In return, Furntech agrees to:

Published by Furntech-AFRDI, the Australasian Furnishing Research and Development Institute, an independent not-for-profit technical organisation serving furniture buyers and sellers in Australia and New Zealand.

T: (03) 6326 6155 F: (03) 6326 3090 E: info@furntech.org.au

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- permit the use of the Furntech-AFRDI logo to promote goods covered by the agreement; and
- commend to specifiers and purchasers the goods covered by the agreement in lists on the Institute's website.

A copy of the agreement is available on request.

Furntech publishes lists of certified products on the very popular Furntech website, www.funtech.org.au. The AFRDI Blue Tick certified desk list is available via this [link](#).

Please contact us if you require further information on the AFRDI Blue Tick Product Certification Scheme.

12 What You Get

Assuming that the product complies and that you are prepared to sign an AFRDI Blue Tick product certification agreement, at the end of the process Furntech will:

- issue a Test Report and a product certificate;
- enter into a product certification agreement with the supplier of the product or add the product to an existing product certification agreement; and
- add the product to the Furntech list of endorsed products under the AFRDI Blue Tick Product Certification Scheme.

If the supplier is not prepared to sign the AFRDI Blue Tick agreement then the product can not be endorsed by Furntech. In such instances only a test report(s) will be provided, and you will not be able to state that the product is AFRDI Blue Tick certified.

13 The Next Step

If you wish to proceed with testing, please follow these steps:

- 1 send to us a brochure or other material, and an explanation of what parts of the range you want certified. This should enable us to prepare a quote for you;
- 2 if you accept the quotation, complete the Testing Request form for each range and return (email) it to Furntech. Also attach a copy to the test samples you will be sending to us;
- 3 mark the name of the company and the model name/number on each test sample and send the samples to our laboratory; and
- 4 arrange for payment of the quoted amount (we accept Visa and MasterCard). Please phone 03 63 266 155 or email admin@furntech.org.au to request an invoice to facilitate payment.

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Testing Request – Desks & Workstations

Please complete for **each model** to be tested and **fax (03 6326 3090)** or **email (info@furntech.org.au)** one copy and attach another to the sample before dispatch.

All fields must be completed.

ORGANISATION:

PRIMARY CONTACT: (*Who do we contact during testing?*)

STREET ADDRESS:

.....P/CODE:.....

TEL:FAX:.....

WEB:.....

EMAIL:.....ABN:.....

FACTORY NAME:.....

FACTORY ADDRESS:

.....COUNTRY:.....P/CODE:.....

Product Description

MODEL NAME/NUMBER: (***PRINT*** the name you wish to appear on the certificate)

.....

PROTOTYPE* ☐ PRODUCTION SAMPLE ☐

***NOTE: No certificate will be issued for a prototype, and it therefore will not appear on the Furntech-AFRDI Webpage. After prototype testing, a further *production sample* will need to be submitted for full testing at additional cost before the product is certified.**

Authorisations and Declaration

I warrant and declare that the information provided is accurate in every detail.

I authorise Furntech-AFRDI or its agents to carry out tests at the quoted price.

Signature of authorised officer:

Name (***PRINT***)

Position in company: Date:

Test sample(s) will not normally be returned. If you do want them returned, please indicate here (note extra freight charges will apply):

YES ☐

Any significant issues pending/impending with product (e.g. field failures, claims, recalls)?

YES ☐ (if yes, please attach summary) NO ☐

OPTIONAL: Should the product(s) described above be certified by Furntech-AFRDI, I authorise Furntech-AFRDI to list the compliance certificate on its website.

YES ☐ NO ☐

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