



# ***Information Kit on Assessing Bunk Beds***

## **Introduction**

Governments around Australia and New Zealand have introduced regulations which took effect from 1 November 2002 which have made it an offence to sell bunk beds (and beds over 800 mm high) that do not comply with a set of safety requirements described in *Australia Consumer Protection Notice Number 1 of 2003 Consumer Product Safety Standard: Bunk Beds*. A summary of those requirements is attached. The regulation is based on an Australian/New Zealand Standard (AS/NZS 4220: *Bunk beds*). Products which comply with the full standard will comply with the regulations.

This paper outlines the process by which products are independently assessed against the mandatory standards and issued with a Certificate Of Compliance. The currency of that certificate is maintained for a period of three years by regular quality monitoring.

## **Assessments**

Assessments involve making a series of measurements. These are undertaken at Furntech-AFRDI or at your premises.

Bunk models which are essentially the same – that is vary only in cosmetic ways – may be treated as one model for the purposes of Certificates of Compliance. The assessor will make judgements about the degree of similarity after inspecting the models.

### Prototypes

We are happy to assess prototypes. Assessment is often undertaken to help ensure compliance prior to the expensive stage of tooling up for production. However, although we will assess prototypes, we are not prepared to certify them. Prototypes that have been successfully tested will receive a test report only. The report will relate to the compliance of the particular sample that was tested i.e. it will not be a statement of general product endorsement. A certification agreement will only be entered into after an off-tool production sample has been satisfactorily assessed.

If you wish to have a prototype assessed please identify the item as a prototype on the Assessment Request Form attached.

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## General

### **Please note:**

Many instances of harm in relation to bunk beds are due to children falling from them. Bunks with accessories encouraging children to play on or around them are likely to increase the probability of this or other events occurring. As a consequence Furntech-AFRDI feels a responsibility to apply at least some level of scrutiny to these accessories prior to granting product safety certification. Therefore, bunks built with accessories such as slides, basketball hoops etc will, in addition to the tests undertaken on the basic bunk, require to have those add-ons tested against relevant standards (or parts thereof) to achieve overall product safety compliance. The principle being: *'assessment of the total product (including accessories where appropriate) to the bunk regulation, plus accessories to additional relevant standards'*. We regard accessories as items 'extra to the normal features of a bunk' but would exclude things such as desks and shelves (unless they were so designed to present obvious hazards) and typically include only those features which were designed as 'play accessories'. Where no relevant standard existed for the type of accessory featured we would assess to our own requirements with the emphasis being on 'proof of safety'. In most cases where additional testing is required additional testing charges will be applicable. Please feel free to contact us in advance to discuss testing options.

## **Costs**

Bunks are to be delivered for assessment to our laboratory.

### **Laboratory assessment**

- ◆ An **assessment fee** (depends on complexity of design) including return delivery between any of our freight depots and the testing laboratory; and
- ◆ A **certification fee** for each product found to comply with the safety standard. Complying products will be listed as compliant on our website.

The fees are payable in advance and must be received before the assessment. An invoice will be provided on request if this will help to facilitate payment. Facilities are available for payment by Visa and MasterCard.

## **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.

## **Certificates of Compliance**

The results of bunk bed assessments issued by Furntech-AFRDI will be used to satisfy distributors, retailers and regulators that the product complies with the regulations. To ensure that the product continues to comply, the Institute

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enters into a contract with the supplier and maintains an on-going check on the quality of the product over a three year period after which the certificate can be renewed.

Monitoring involves regular random audits and the investigation of complaints arising from the sale of endorsed products.

Under the Certificate of Compliance process, suppliers sign an agreement 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 manufacturer;
- not use (nor permit its agents to use) the Certificate of Compliance to promote goods which are not covered by the agreement;
- submit goods for reassessment every three years if required or as necessary when the requirements of the Regulations change;
- agree to random checks of the quality of products covered by the agreement;
- pay a monitoring fee - the first three years monitoring fee is included in the assessment charge.

In return, Furntech-AFRDI agrees to issue a Certificate of Compliance and to commend goods covered by Certificates of Compliance in lists on the Institute's website. A copy of the agreement is available on request.

## The Next Step

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

- a) complete the Assessment Request Form attached and return it to Furntech-AFRDI; and
- b) calculate payment required and send your payment to Furntech-AFRDI (we also take Visa and MasterCard). Please phone 03 6326 6155 to request an invoice if this will help to facilitate payment.

## Confidentiality

Testing conducted by Furntech-AFRDI is absolutely confidential. The Institute's procedures prohibit the disclosure of the fact that an item is being assessed and the results of any such assessment without the client's express permission.

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## Assessment Request Form–Bunk Beds

*Safety Requirements of Commonwealth Consumer Protection Notice  
Number 1 of 2003 Consumer Product Safety Standard: Bunk Beds*

- \* Name of Organisation: .....
- \* Name of Contact (a): .....
- \* Postal Address .....
- .....
- \* Telephone Number: .....
- Fax Number: .....
- Email: .....
- Website: .....
- ABN Number: .....
- \* Factory Name (b): .....
- \* Factory Address (b): .....
- Product Names (c): .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- \* Prototype/Production sample (indicate which is applicable)

\* It is mandatory that information be entered in these fields.

### Authorisations

I hereby authorise Furntech-AFRDI or its agents to carry out the assessment described above at the agreed price.

Should the product(s) described above be found to comply with the Regulations, I authorise Furntech-AFRDI to publicise the fact and agree to enter into an agreement to maintain the Certificate of Compliance.

Signature of Authorised Officer .....

Date .....

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#### NOTES

- (a) Please insert the name of the person Furntech-AFRDI staff should contact.
- (b) Please specify the street address and name of the factory in which the product is made.
- (c) Please print the name and/or number of the product you wish to appear on the Certificate.

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## Summary of Mandatory Requirements

### Disclaimer

This document is an abridged version of the Commonwealth of Australia *Consumer Protection Notice Number 1 of 2003 Consumer Product Safety Standard: Bunk Beds* which refers to Australian/New Zealand Standard 4220:1994 *Bunk Beds ("the Regulation")*. This summary is intended as a guide only and does not amend or replace the provisions of the *Consumer Safety Standard: Copies of the Regulation* (which the Governments of New Zealand and the Australian States and Territories have agreed to promulgate) and of the Standard are available from Furntech-AFRDI at the price charged by Standards Australia.

### Definition of a Bunk Bed

The Regulation defines a bunk bed as

- a) a set of components that are assembled or are ready for assembly into single beds or double/single combination which will be stacked one over the other; or
- b) any single bed, other than a hospital bed, where the upper surface of the mattress base is at least 800 mm above the floor surface.

### Design

#### Guardrails

Any bunk bed in which the upper surface of the mattress base is at least 800 mm from the floor shall have barriers (e.g. guardrails or bed ends) which form a rollout protection on all sides of the bed.

The guardrails shall comply with the following:

- a) Guardrails may be permanently fixed or attached to allow temporary removal and replacement. If detachable, it shall be incapable of removal by a force of 100 N (10 kg) in any direction;
- b) The upper surface shall be smooth and continuous and free from protrusions or other potential snag points;
- c) The minimum vertical distance between the upper surface of the guardrail and the upper surface of the mattress base shall be 260 mm;
- d) The vertical distance between the upper surface of the guardrail and the mark indicating the maximum height of the mattress shall be at least 160 mm or be at least 360 mm above the surface of the mattress base.
- e) Where an opening in the guardrail is provided for easier access to the bed, the opening shall have a minimum width of 300 mm and a maximum of 400 mm up to the maximum height of the guardrail;

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- f) Other gaps in the guardrail must be either less than 95 mm wide or greater than 230 mm wide provided that if the gaps are greater than 230 mm wide the maximum (usually the diagonal) dimension of these gaps does not exceed 400 mm

## Large gaps (Section 6.4.3)

Any gap that is —

- a) either —
- i) above the upper (or elevated) bed; OR
  - ii) between —
    - A) the bed ends of the lower bed and the upper bed;
    - B) the guardrail (if required) of the lower bed and the upper bed;
    - C) the sides of the lower bed and the upper bed; AND
- b) sufficiently large enough to allow passage of a 230 mm diameter probe; may be more than 400 mm (measured in any direction) provided that the gap does not have a reducing configuration.

## Protrusions

Protrusions shall comply with the following requirements:

- a) except for dome nuts less than 5 mm in height, there shall be no protrusions within a bunk bed; and
- b) inside, outside and along the top of the bunk, protrusions shall not be more than 8 mm unless they are so designed that they cannot snag onto clothing.

In respect to the determination of unacceptable protrusions and snag hazards there is some debate as to appropriate methods of testing. Furntech-AFRDI uses the Ball and Chain test as a guide to the evaluation of potential snag hazards (the principle and application of which is described in AS/NZS 2195 – 1999 Folding cots – safety requirements).

The objectionable feature of snagging is that it can involve hanging and possible death which can be quite rapid. Because of this Furntech is more than comfortable in taking a conservative approach to assessing for possible snag points.

## Unacceptable Gaps

Any gaps 600 mm or more above the floor (including between the rungs of a ladder) may not be between 95 mm and 230 mm wide. Under the terms of the Regulation, testing for fall-through entrapments are to be carried out without a mattress on the bed.

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## Marking

In addition to any markings required by Federal, State or Territory Law, all bunk beds shall be permanently and indelibly marked with the following information:

For the upper bed, *where the height of the guard rail is less than 360 mm above the mattress base*: a distinct mark along at least one side or end to indicate the maximum height of the mattress together with the words 'MAX MATTRESS HEIGHT'.

For bunk beds of Australian or New Zealand manufacture—

- i) the manufacturer's name and address; or
- ii) the manufacturer's trademark and address

For imported beds — the Australian or New Zealand distributor's name and address.

**Compliance with the Regulations can be independently verified by a Certificate of Compliance issued by Furntech-AFRDI.**