



## Product safety bulletin May 2009

# Flotation toys and swimming aids

The ACCC is keen to alert suppliers to requirements of two new mandatory product safety standards:

- Flotation and aquatic toys
- Swimming and flotation aids.

These new mandatory product safety standards replace a previous standard declared in March 1992 that covered similar categories of toys and equipment, and was based on Australian Standard (AS) 1900–1991, *Flotation toys and swimming aids for children*. This Australian standard has been revised and is now known as AS 1900–2002, *Flotation aids for water familiarization and swimming tuition*.

Requirements for flotation and aquatic toys are now referenced from Australian/New Zealand Standard (AS/NZS) International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 8124.1:2002, *Safety of toys: Safety aspects related to mechanical and physical properties* (ISO 8124.1:2000, MOD).

Requirements for swimming aids and flotation aids are now referenced from AS 1900–2002, *Flotation aids for water familiarization and swimming tuition*.

Importantly, changes have been made to the categorisation of products as well as to performance and testing requirements.

All suppliers, including manufacturers, importers, wholesalers, retailers and hire companies, are required to comply with the requirements of these two mandatory standards.

## Flotation and aquatic toys

Under the new mandatory standard, a flotation and aquatic toy is an article:

- designed or clearly intended for use in play by children under 14 years of age, and
- intended to bear the mass of a child in water, whether or not:
  - inflatable
  - worn, or
  - otherwise attached to the body.

These items include but are not limited to:

- inflatable novelty shapes
- inflatable toy boats that by virtue of their size and design are intended for use in shallow water
- unattached complete or partial rings.

### Excluded items:

- beach balls
- surfboards
- body/boogie boards
- inflatable air beds
- inflatable boats that by virtue of their size and design are intended for use in deep water
- kickboards.

## Requirements

Until 31 March 2010 suppliers can choose to comply with either:

1. AS 1900–1991, *Flotation toys and swimming aids for children*, approved by Standards Australia on 12 July 1991 and incorporating all amendments approved by Standards Australia, with variations as specified in Consumer Protection Notice No. 2 of 2009.

### OR

2. Clauses 3.2, 4.19, C.2.6 and E.33 of AS/NZS ISO 8124.1:2002, *Safety of toys: Safety aspects related to mechanical and physical properties* (ISO 8124.1:2000, MOD) approved by Standards Australia on 30 April 2002, with variations as specified in Consumer Protection Notice No. 2 of 2009.

However, from 1 April 2010 mandatory safety requirements will **only** be based on:

- Clauses 3.2, 4.19, C.2.6 and E.33 of AS/NZS ISO 8124.1:2002, *Safety of toys: Safety aspects related to mechanical and physical properties* (ISO 8124.1:2000, MOD) approved by Standards Australia on 30 April 2002, as amended by Consumer Protection Notice No. 2 of 2009.

## Swimming and flotation aids for water familiarisation and swimming tuition

Under the new mandatory standard, swimming and flotation aids are items designed for children under 14 years of age.

These aids are used to give children confidence and to help them become familiar with the water or acquire unaided buoyancy during swimming lessons.

These are aids that children can wear, have attached to their bodies or sit in to aid buoyancy.

Flotation and swimming aids include, but are not limited to:

- armbands
- attached rings
- swimming aid vests.

### Excluded items:

- inflatable novelty shapes
- unattached complete or partial rings
- kickboards
- articles designed for therapeutic use by people with a disability
- articles, including life jackets or other personal flotation devices, that are within the scope of AS 4758, *Personal flotation devices*, as at the date of Consumer Protection Notice No. 3 of 2009.

## Requirements

Until 31 March 2010 suppliers can choose to comply with either:

1. AS 1900–1991, *Flotation toys and swimming aids for children*, approved by Standards Australia on 12 July 1991, incorporating all amendments approved by Standards Australia, with variations as specified in Consumer Protection Notice No. 3 of 2009.

### OR

2. AS 1900–2002, *Flotation aids for water familiarization and swimming tuition*, approved by Standards Australia on 30 November 2001, with variations as amended by Consumer Protection Notice No. 3 of 2009.

However, from 1 April 2010 mandatory safety requirements will **only** be based on the relevant clauses and variations of:

- AS 1900–2002, *Flotation aids for water familiarization and swimming tuition*, approved by Standards Australia on 30 November 2001, with variations as specified in Consumer Protection Notice No. 3 of 2009.

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## Other product safety bulletins

*Toy and nursery update*  
(March 2009)

*Banned DEG in toothpaste*  
(September 2007)

*Mandatory standard for caravan jacks*  
(November 2007)

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### Important notice

Information in this fact sheet is for general guidance only. It reflects the ACCC's views on what is required to comply with the *Trade Practices Act 1974*. It does not constitute legal advice and should not be relied on as a statement of the law relating to the Act. You should obtain legal advice if there is doubt about whether any conduct may breach the Act, or whether laws in your state or territory impose other requirements or responsibilities on you.

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