

Submission from the Australian Glass and Glazing Association for the NSW License review



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Contents

Retention of Glazing on the NSW license list.	3
Summary.....	3
Glazing Industry.....	3
Dollar threshold for Glazing work	3
Safety	4
Safety Statistics	4
1. Case study Domestic Balustrades	5
2. Case study Overhead glass in bathroom.....	5
3. Case study Shop fronts	6
4. Case study Splashbacks	7
5. Case study Business impact.....	7
6. Case study Child care center.....	8
Additional information.....	8
APPENDIX 1 Glazing Industry Related Standards	10

Retention of Glazing on the NSW license list.

Summary.

The AGGA fully supports the Ministers review to simplify license requirements in NSW. Of the three licenses relevant to the Glass industry our position is that, as most glazing firms undertake shower screen and splash back installation, we propose these licenses be rolled in to one license which will be the existing glazing license.

Due to consumer safety issues and compliance requirements we believe the \$5,000 threshold over which a license is required must be reduce to \$0.

The AGGA would be willing to work with the NSW government in developing a Glazing trade license supported with a “competency equivalent” program to address any transitional issues.

Glazing Industry¹

Glaziers play an important role in the installation of specialist glass products such as hanging bi-fold doors, sky-lights, internal glass splash backs, mirrors and shower screens with an unprecedented demand for installation of commercial glass products on multi-unit apartment developments over the past five years. Competitive conditions are likely to remain intense in the household emergency glass repair and replacement market.

Dollar threshold for Glazing work

Based on the knowledge required to select the correct glass and then install all types of glass to the relevant Australian Standards/Building code we believe the \$5,000 threshold over which a license is required in NSW is far too high for glazing.

Changes to energy efficiency requirements in residential dwellings means that special glass products such as coated glass and double-glazed units are now commonplace and if not installed correctly, do not perform or last and can result in higher financial burden to the consumer to correct poor selection of glass or incorrect installation.

¹ IBISWorld Industry Report E3245 Glazing Services in Australia

The above issues all exist regardless of the job value and we propose this threshold be removed.

Safety

Glass is a dangerous material and must be handled by qualified tradespeople. The risk to consumers or unqualified workers handling or using glass, without the correct personal protection, specialized tools, product knowledge and handling risk assessment is something that licensing helps reduce.

Safety Statistics²

Glass and associated industries sustained 37% of major claims in an industry that is dominated by 93% of micro and small business's.

- 36% of claims were major claims similar to that of **all** NSW industries combined
- 7% of the claims were permanent disability claims

Most common types of injuries were:

- Soft tissue injuries
- Laceration or open wound not involving traumatic amputation
- Contusion, bruising and superficial injuries.

Most common hazards were:

- Muscular stress caused by lifting or handling objects.
- Hitting stationary or moving objects.

Permanent disabilities:

- There were 60 (6%) permanent disabilities over 2011/12 to 2012/13
- The total cost of these permanent disabilities was estimated to be \$4.7 million
- There were 5 fatalities between 2007 & 2013

***Glass is a dangerous material and must be handled
by qualified tradespeople. This concern is
supported by Safework NSW***

² All the statistics shown have been supplied by Safework NSW August 2018

Australian standards ³

The correct selection of glass relies on applying complex Australian Standards which also requires the expertise of qualified glaziers. AGGA is a major contributor to the development and maintenance of the relevant Australian Standards for the glass industry. These Australian Standards are also called up in various building regulations and are therefore legally required to be adhered to. The understanding and application of these standards are covered by qualified glaziers under the formal Glazier training and recognition of prior learning programs.

The incorrect selection of glass and incorrect glazing methods poses a significant risk to consumers and business alike. Non-Compliance examples are covered in the following case studies;

1. Case study. Domestic balustrades

A recent inspection, by a qualified glazier, was conducted on a balustrade installation in a two story house located in Yagona. It found that the external unframed balustrade had no handrails. This is a noncompliance under the AS1288 and an immediate danger to the occupier. Due to this non compliance the consumer will now incur additional costs to correct the error and make the installation complaint and safe.

2. Case study. Overhead glass in bathroom.

The home owner approached an NSW AGGA member to replace overhead glass ceiling panel which has shattered. She had approached the builder, but they would take no ownership or responsibility. The house renovation is in Maroubra in Sydney.

The panels were purchased and installed by a builder who had no glazing experience, the installer used was not qualified a glazier nor did the builder consult with any qualified glaziers on this job.

The panels exploded when no one was in the room otherwise it could have resulted in major injuries. The consumer is now facing additional costs to replace the shattered panels.

^{Note:} See the front page of this submission for a picture of a shattered panel.

³ See Appendix 1 for a full list of Australian Standards required to ensure compliant selection and installation.

3. Case study. Shop fronts

A qualified glazier was asked to quote on three other installations in a western Sydney Shopping Center. On receiving the shop drawings he informed the tenants that none of the installations conformed to the Australian Standard 1288-2006.

An offer was made to bring the installations into compliance to the shopping center owner/developer. They claimed the major tenants were responsible to install their shopfronts to AS1288, but the developer did not want inclusion of the necessary glass fins as these would spoil the aesthetics of the center if all the “minor tenancies” glazed to comply with AS1288.

Two shopfronts were subsequently installed by other contractors neither of whom had their own license but quoted their shopfitter’s license. Not long after the opening of the center a complaint was submitted concerning “glass moving in my shopfront” in the same center. A qualified glazier, and member of the NSWGGA Executive offered to investigate further.

The complainant had a hobby store opposite one of the major takeaway food stores whereby school children would congregate outside her shop & lean up against her glass shopfront. This had shelving inside the store immediately behind the glass shopfront which was installed with 6mm Clear Toughened Float to the size of 2480H x 2460W = 6.10m².

The store’s wares were falling off the shelving due to the glass shopfront bowing when under load. The maximum size for 6mm toughened to comply with AS1288 is 4m². The qualified glazier asked to see the Glazing Certificate & found that the certificate referred to a standard AS 2444 which has nothing to do with glass or glass installation it is the standard for the installation of portable fire extinguishers.

Further enquiries produce five more certificates:

Three stated only that “the glazing has been installed to conform to all relevant standards” – all three were separate glazing companies with two of them providing the same license number. On contacting these three the qualified glazier found that the licenses were the shopfitters licenses & the contractors installing the windows had no knowledge of AS1288 requirements.

One other quoted the clause 5.7.2 in AS1288 which refers to glass installations not being able to be mistaken for a door or opening being able to be installed with annealed glass. It gave details of the maximum sizes of glass to be installed,

whether it be safety or annealed. The contractor confirmed he had no idea of the standards requirements for glass or installation when contacted.

The shopping center's project manager denied any complicity as all tenants were responsible for their certificates and could see no reason to approach the tenants concerned. All the non-compliant glazing is still in place to this day apart from the hobby store which had a broken panel replaced to AS1288 specifications.

4. Case study. Splashbacks

A qualified glazier was contracted to replace a broken panel from a kitchen splashback in one of twelve townhouses in a southern suburb of Sydney.

On inspection he found that the glass was only 20mm away from a gas cooktop. The gyprock behind the glass was brown & black in parts – showing signs of heat damage. Neither installation complied with AS 5061.

Further inspection after removing the broken glass showed no installation of non-combustible material adjacent to the cooktop prior to the glass installation.

This townhouse (and six others in the complex) had their original splashback installed by a licensed painting contractor. The contractor stated that they installed 4mm Toughened glass painted onsite to the color each occupant requested even though it was in clear breach of AS5061 and AS1288.

The developer and contractor denied any obligation to liability resulting in four of the owners having to incur a major additional cost to make their kitchen splashback compliant and safe to use.

5. Case study. Business impact

The installation contractor deemed that a car showroom was not considered to provide any unimpeded path of travel to persons and none of the glazing could be mistaken for a door or opening, so the non-licensed aluminum fabricator, installed annealed glass to all panels in what they decided were "internal shopfronts". The glazing was in aluminum frames to the showroom within the car yard which they decided made them internal shopfronts.

Inspection by a qualified glazier found all glazing to be non-compliant and not until the Certifier was informed of this that a licensed glazier, employed by a NSWGGA Member, replaced all the glazing.

Not only did the original glazing present extreme danger to the occupants but the non-complying glazing was in areas the public utilized for access to the dealership. This non-complaint installation impacted on the business profitability due to down time, they incurred major additional costs to rectify the non-compliance and all the time it was a danger to the general public.

6. Case study. Child care center

A house in western Sydney had applied for certification to become a child-minding Centre the owner couldn't get the glazing contractor to provide either a license number or a Compliance Certificate so approached a qualified glazier to supply a certificate.

On inspection he found that the contractor had installed manifestation to the glass sliding doors where children would be but **none** of the glass was safety glass. One broken large door panel (2140H x 915) had been replaced with 4mm clear float. This installation was a clear breach of AS1288 and a major noncompliance impacting on children's safety.

The qualified glazier replaced all panels which were in the designated child minding areas that did not comply to standards. He was then able to provide the compliance certificate for these areas. The consumer occurred a major additional cost for this corrective work. The contractor, who was not a qualified glazier, admitted he saw no need to comply with any Australian Standards.

Additional information.

The AGGA is working with other jurisdictions who are also looking at licensing glazing. An example is the Victorian Building Authority who have identified non-compliant glazing as a major issue and has included the use of licensed glaziers into the VBA code.

NSW has the largest number of glazing business in Australia with over 32% of glazing business registered in NSW and trading in the domestic sector⁴

The AGGA fully understands that the licensing requirement under this review by The Department of Fair Trading is only for the domestic glazing installations sector. We

⁴ IBISWorld Industry Report E3245 Glazing Services in Australia

strongly believe that the case studies supplied also clearly show that commercial glazing installations should be reviewed, and similar licensing requirement should be considered.

The AGGA has many more case studies to support this submission and will be please to supply a more detailed case studies report if required.

This submission is supported by the Australian Windows Association, Master Builders Association and the Housing Industry of Australia. Letters of support can be supplied if required.

APPENDIX 1 Glazing Industry Related Standards

AS/NZS 4666:2012 - Insulating glass units

Sets out requirements and guidelines for the long term type testing, glazing, periodic manufacturing testing and other associated aspects to do with insulating glass units.

AS 1288:2006 - Glass in Buildings - Selection & Installation

Specifies procedures for the design, selection and installation of glass in residential and commercial buildings. Includes guidance for installation practice, based on proven techniques.

AS/NZS 2208:1996 - Safety glazing materials in buildings

Specifies the functional properties of various safety glazing materials, including toughened glass, laminated glass, wired glass, organic-coated glass and plastic. Two grades are covered, with different impact performance levels. Other requirements include size tolerances, weathering and ageing performance.

AS/NZS 1170.2:2011 - Structural design actions - Wind actions

Provides design values of wind actions for use in structural design. It is intended to be used in conjunction with AS/NZS 1170.0, which gives the procedure for structural design. Wind speeds and direction factors are provided for a range of probabilities of exceedance. Other factors cover the environment around the structure, the geometry of the structure and the dynamic interaction of the structure with the wind.

AS/NZS 4667:2000 - Quality requirements for cut to size & processed glass

Sets out the quality requirements for cut sizes of flat, transparent, clear ordinary annealed, tinted heat-absorbing, patterned and wired glass for general glazing and/or further processing.

AS 2047:2014 - Windows and external glazed doors in buildings

Specifies requirements for materials, construction, installation and glazing for windows, sliding doors, adjustable glass louvres, shopfronts, and window walls with one-piece framing elements.

AS/NZS 2080:2006 - Safety glazing for land vehicles

Specifies the requirements and includes methods of tests for flat and curved toughened and laminated safety glazing for windscreens and other glazing for land vehicles.

AS 3959:2009 - Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas

Sets out requirements for the construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas in order to improve their performance when they are subjected to burning debris, radiant heat or flame contact generated from a bushfire. Also includes a methodology for assessing categories of bushfire attack in respect of a site situated in an area that has been designated by a relevant authority as bushfire-prone.