

IPP 011	Barriers for Escalators	Apr 2025
AEA	New Installations / Modernisations	

Subject: Barriers for Escalators

In recent times the lift industry has noticed pushback from Builders, building owners and Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) not to install barriers at the entry of escalators when there is a foreseeable risk.

This document clarifies the necessity for barriers on escalators, showing the relevant requirements from AS1735.5.1 2019.

Requirements

WH&S Regulations, require lifts, escalators and moving walkways (plant) to be design registered to a published standard, engineering principals or a combination of both.

NSW WH&S Regulations prescribe lifts, escalators and moving walkways as 'high risk plant', Part 1.2 10 (1B) (c).

Plant required to be registered under NSW WH&S Regulations, see Schedule 5, Part 1, 1.4 Lifts, escalators and moving walkways.

Requirements regarding published standards and engineering principals, see NSW WH&S Regulations, Division 3, 250, 2 (e)(ii)

Note¹ – All jurisdictions have similar WH&S Regulations to NSW, always check local requirements.

Note² - The National Construction Code (NCC) 2022 does not have any prescriptive requirements with regards to this escalator requirement.

Published Standards, the current Australian standard for escalators and moving walks is AS 1735.5.1:2019, an identical adoption of EN 115-1:2017.

In Australia escalators (and moving walks) would therefore be design registered to AS 1735.5.1:2019 (with no requirement for engineering principals to be applied). Meaning to be in compliance with WH&S the design of an escalator (or moving walk) as per AS 1735.5.1:2019 is required.

AS 1735.5.1:2019, states regarding the use of shopping trolleys and baggage carts, and barrier design,

Refer – AS 1735.5.1:2019 Annex A, A4.1

- In all buildings where there is a reasonably foreseeable risk that shopping trolleys and/or baggage carts can be taken onto escalators,

adequate measures shall be taken to eliminate risks and access **shall be** prevented

Refer – AS 1735.5.1:2019 Annex I, I.1

- The use of both shopping trolleys and baggage carts on escalators is unsafe and **shall not** be permitted

Refer – AS 1735.5.1 2019 A.4.2 defines the barrier design

- The barriers **shall be** installed at the entrance only (if the escalators' direction can be alternated then barriers will need to be removable and replaceable at either end of the units, the circulation space **shall** need to be considered at either end of the unit/s)
- The design **shall not** create another risk
- The free entrance width between the ends of the newels and barriers, and between barriers themselves **shall be** at least 500 mm and less than the width of shopping trolley or baggage cart
- The height **shall be** between 900 mm and 1100 mm
- The barrier/s and its fixation **shall** withstand a load of 3000 N at 200 mm from the finished floor level (FFL)
- The barrier **shall be** fixed preferably at the building structures. They can be fixed at the floor plate, however when the defined forces are applied there shall be no permanent deformation or increased/additional gaps.

AEA Position and Summary

- Australia's design registration for all escalators and moving walks is to AS 1735.5.1 2019 in compliance with the WH&S ACT and Regulations.
- Therefore, in all applications where there is a foreseeable use of shopping trolleys or baggage carts in an area where new escalators or modernisations are occurring, barriers **shall be** installed.

Note³ – The AEA clarifies that shopping trolleys and baggage carts be extended to include prams/strollers and mobility aids such as wheelchairs.

As indicated in the Introduction of AS 1735.5.1:2029, extract below,

The use of wheelchairs on escalators and moving walks can lead to dangerous situations which cannot be mitigated by machine designs and therefore should not be permitted.

The use of lifts is the preferred method of vertical travel for most people with disabilities and in particular wheelchair users and persons with guide dogs.

- On projects where either the builder, developer or owner (PCBU) **will not** install the barriers as required, you should inform them in writing noting the relevant standard/code reference and stating the risks, and as the supplier/installer of the equipment and not the PCBU you do not accept any responsibility or liability. Notify your legal department.

- On projects where either the builder, developer or owner (PCBU) **will not** install the barriers as required, do not accept/approve any Risk Assessments done on behalf of the builder, developer or owner (PCBU).
- Maintenance providers should also notify the owner (PCBU) of the building and inform them of the risks that have been transferred to them by the builder.
- In certain circumstances the buildings' use may change in time, and this can again raise questions of compliance, considering when the units were installed and the applicable standard being applied at the time, Maintenance providers need to be aware of these changes and provide owners with details of compliance.

For further information contact the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM), your installation / maintenance provider or the AEA.

Version Control

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R1	Draft	AEA	1/04/2025
V1.0	For publication	AEA	1/08/2025