

MEDIA RELEASE



Embargoed until Wednesday, 16 April 2014

NEW PLAYGROUND STANDARDS

- **Promotes fun and enjoyment over risk-aversion**
- **New standards to encourage outdoor-activity**
- **Develops key skills in risk-taking and judgement**

In an effort to encourage children to play outdoors, Standards Australia today announced significant changes to playground standards which will make playgrounds more fun, stimulating and exciting.

"One of the joys of Australian childhood is being outdoors racing around and having fun with your friends in playgrounds. Far from wrapping kids in cotton wool, this standard is all about challenging kids and developing important skills for life," said Dr Bronwyn Evans, Chief Executive Officer, Standards Australia.

"The standard will allow Australian children to taste risk and excitement. They will perceive they are taking greater risks, and in so doing stretch and test their limits," said Associate Professor David Eager.

Following an extensive public comment process, Standards Australia has published revised Playground Standards, AS 4685 Parts 1 to 6. The revised standard is an adoption of the European Standard for Playground Equipment EN 1176:2008 Parts 1 to 6 with some minor deviations that take account of specific Australian safety and design requirements such as higher UV exposure.

Associate Professor Eager, Chairperson of Standards Australia's Children's Playground Equipment Committee, CS-005, said the standard seeks to minimise risk of injury to children using playgrounds and specify minimal acceptable standards for equipment.

"The standard is not intended to provide risk free play environments. Research has confirmed that risk-taking is an essential feature of play and healthy childhood development. AS 4685:2014 is based on decades of injury data and accident patterns that have been observed in the children population around the world," he added.

This series of standards will allow playground equipment manufacturers in Australian and overseas to trade with reduced barriers.

"Australian children will be able to enjoy and experience a larger and more exciting range of playground equipment. I hope it will encourage more children to be outdoors and exercising," Dr Evans concluded said.

ENDS.

Media Contact **Nicholas Davy, 0405 506 457**
Head of Public Affairs

Australian Standards are available through SAI Global www.saiglobal.com/shop