

AS/NZS 4442:1997

Australian/New Zealand Standard<sup>®</sup>

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**Office desks**

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*Australasian Furnishing Research  
and Development  
Institute*

This Joint Australian/New Zealand Standard was prepared by Joint Technical Committee CS/88, Commercial Furniture. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 15 November 1996 and on behalf of the Council of Standards New Zealand on 29 November 1996. It was published on 5 February 1997.

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The following interests are represented on Committee CS/88:

Australasian Furnishing Research and Development Institute  
Australia Post  
Australian Chamber of Manufactures  
Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry  
Department of Administrative Services, Australia  
Department of Public Works and Services, N.S.W.  
Ergonomics Society of Australia  
Furnishing Industry Association of Australia  
National Occupational Health and Safety Commission, Australia  
New Zealand Ergonomics Society  
New Zealand Furniture Manufacturers Federation  
Purchasing Australia  
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## PREFACE

This Standard was developed under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Standards Australia and the Australian Furniture Research and Development Institute Limited (AFRDI), and is published as a Joint Australian/New Zealand Standard.

Under the Memorandum, AFRDI acts as an Agency for the development of the text of the Standard which is then reviewed by an appropriate Joint Standards Australia/New Zealand Committee.

The technical content of the Standard was developed by the AFRDI Commercial Furniture working group which based the testing on ANSI/BIFMA X5.5 *Desk Products—Tests*.

The Joint Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand Committee CS/88 on Commercial Furniture then reviewed its content and endorsed its adoption as a Joint Australian/New Zealand Standard.

The objective of this Standard is to provide purchasing authorities, specifiers, users, retailers and manufacturers with a standard for office desks that specifies function, durability, stability and performance characteristics and enables use of these criteria to assist in selection and evaluation.

The term ‘normative’ has been used in this Standard to define the application of the appendix to which it applies. A ‘normative’ appendix is an integral part of a Standard.

It is advisable to follow the requirements of AS/NZS 4443 *Office panel systems—Workstations* and AS/NZS 4442 *Office desks* in conjunction, for consistency of product when both workstation furniture and desks are intended to be used in the same workplace. Dimensions and test methods in these Standards have been aligned wherever applicable.

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## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
FOREWORD .....	5
SECTION 1 SCOPE AND GENERAL	
1.1 SCOPE .....	6
1.2 OBJECTIVE .....	6
1.3 REFERENCED DOCUMENTS .....	6
1.4 DEFINITIONS .....	7
1.5 FUNCTION .....	7
1.6 STRENGTH AND DURABILITY .....	7
1.7 STABILITY .....	7
1.8 WORK SURFACE RESISTANCE .....	7
1.9 COMPONENTS AND MATERIALS .....	7
1.10 TOLERANCE .....	7
SECTION 2 FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS	
2.1 SAFETY .....	8
2.2 DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS .....	8
SECTION 3 STRENGTH AND DURABILITY REQUIREMENTS	
3.1 GENERAL .....	13
3.2 PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS .....	13
SECTION 4 STABILITY REQUIREMENT	
4.1 GENERAL .....	15
4.2 PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENT .....	15
SECTION 5 WORK SURFACE RESISTANCE	
5.1 GENERAL .....	15
5.2 PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS .....	15
SECTION 6 REQUIREMENTS FOR COMPONENTS AND MATERIALS	
6.1 RESISTANCE TO HUMIDITY CHANGES .....	16
6.2 METAL COMPONENTS .....	16
SECTION 7 MARKING, INSTRUCTIONS AND TEST REPORT	
7.1 MARKING REQUIREMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS .....	16
7.2 TEST REPORTS .....	16
APPENDICES	
A HORIZONTAL SURFACE STATIC LOAD TEST .....	17
B TOP LOAD CYCLIC TEST .....	21
C LOCK TEST FOR DRAWERS SUPPORTED BY WORK SURFACES .....	23
D OUTSTOP TEST FOR DRAWERS SUPPORTED BY WORK SURFACES ...	25
E REBOUND TEST FOR DRAWERS SUPPORTED BY WORK SURFACES ..	27
F RACKING TEST .....	29

	<i>Page</i>
G DROP TEST . . . . .	31
H LEG STRENGTH TEST . . . . .	33
I HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL ADJUSTMENT TESTS . . . . .	35
J STABILITY TEST . . . . .	38
K WORK SURFACE RESISTANCE . . . . .	40

## FOREWORD

The strength and durability of the desk is determined by the application of forces simulating normal functional use. The types of tests fall into the general categories of static load, dynamic load and fatigue testing.

The stability of a desk or table is determined by subjecting it to loads in an attempt to tip it over and simulate the weight of a person on one edge.

The Section entitled 'Work Surface Resistance' specifies tests for agents that may be expected to be encountered in normal use.

Desks need to be set at the correct height to help reduce strain on the spine, shoulder and neck muscles. Adjustable height desks allow the work surface to be adjusted to an appropriate height for the individual and the particular task. Adjustable heights are generally recommended for multiuser workstations and for multitasking, e.g. clerical and keyboard operations.

For keyboard tasks the desk height should be set such that, when the operator is sitting with feet flat on the floor, the home row of the keyboard is positioned at, or slightly below, their elbow height. A slightly higher, inclinable desk is generally preferred for clerical work. Operators seated at fixed height desks may require a footrest in order to adjust the chair to an appropriate height and maintain support for feet.

As an alternative, a dedicated keyboard operator desk may be a fixed height desk with an adjustable keyboard platform. Whilst this approach is acceptable, it is not recommended due to the intrusion of the mechanism into the knee-well area and the fact that the desk surface is interrupted by the platform, severely restricting the placement of input devices.

## STANDARDS AUSTRALIA/STANDARDS NEW ZEALAND

**Australian/New Zealand Standard****Office desks**

## SECTION 1 SCOPE AND GENERAL

**1.1 SCOPE** This Standard sets out the requirements for the evaluation, design, and selection of office desks. It specifies minimum requirements for the function, strength, durability and stability of office desks, leaving designers and manufacturers the maximum opportunity to develop suitable products.

The Standard covers freestanding desks such as single and double pedestal desks and extended desk units both adjustable and fixed height. It also includes tables intended for use as desks.

The Standard is applicable to desks used with VDU and associated equipment. It does not specify criteria for VDU equipment.

**1.2 OBJECTIVE** To provide purchasing authorities, specifiers, users, retailers and manufacturers with a Standard for office desks that specifies function, durability, stability and performance characteristics and enables use of these criteria to assist in selection and evaluation.

**1.3 REFERENCED DOCUMENTS** The following documents are referred to in this Standard:

**AS**

1192	Electroplated coatings—Nickel and chromium
1580	Paints and related materials—Methods of test
1580.408.4	Part 408.4 Paint tests—adhesion (crosscut)
2924	Decorative thermosetting laminated sheet
3100	Approval and test specification—General requirements for electrical equipment

**AS/NZS**

1859	Reconstituted wood-based panels
1859.3	Part 3: Decorative overlaid wood panels

**BS**

3962	Finishes for wooden furniture
3962.2	Part 2: Assessment of surface resistance to wet heat
3963.3	Part 3: Assessment of surface resistance to dry heat
3962.4	Part 4: Assessment of surface resistance to cold liquids
3962.5	Part 5: Assessment of surface resistance to cold oils and fats
3962.6	Part 6: Assessment of resistance to mechanical damage

**IEC**

447	Man machine interface—Actuating principles
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**AFRDI**

104	Performance of furniture and furniture components under various climatic conditions
108	Requirements for surface finishes used on timber furniture





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