

REGULAR PLAYGROUND INSPECTION TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

NOTE: THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT CONSTITUTE SPECIFIC STANDARDS ADVICE AND MAY NOT BE SUITABLE FOR ALL SITUATIONS

The owner/operator of the premises is required to undertake certain ongoing regulatory requirements to ensure compliance. These requirements are stipulated by the standards to be the responsibility of the owner/operator.

The Local Government Act stipulates in section 9, “A Council must in the performance of its role give effect to the overarching governance principles.... The following are the overarching governance principles— Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the *relevant law*.”

For the *relevant laws* relating to playgrounds, which are a Class 10b structures under the requirements of the National Construction Code, compliance with AS 4685 Series is mandatory. As such, asset owners must ensure internal staff meet the requirement of a “Competent Person” within AS 4685 Series to ensure they are meeting their requirements.

Furthermore, for private premises and local government, the Safe Work Act applies; Model Work Health and Safety Bill as of 24 November 2023, which in Division 2, Part 19, 3 - must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable: (a) the provision and maintenance of a work environment without risks to health and safety...”

Under the Safe Work Act in most instances, playgrounds are also considered “high risk plant” as playgrounds contain equipment with movement or height with a designated safety surface to protect

from falls. Therefore, asset owners should ensure that the staff is equipped with competency to carry out tasks within the playground without risks to health and safety.

COMPETENT PERSON

A competent person refers to a person who has, through a combination of training, education, and experience, acquired knowledge and skills enabling that person to correctly perform a specific task.

To ensure compliance in accordance with the above Acts, asset owners should refer to industry benchmarks and requirements as outlined below for specific asset trainings as set out by Australia Skills Quality Authority (ASQA); or hold a Higher Education qualification of the same and have undertaken CPD regularly.

Training with an RTO provider ensure that the staff meets the ASQA skill assessment requirement. An RTO provider demonstrates that it meets an ongoing strict regulation requirement such as the curriculum, trainer qualification, and industry engagement.

INTERNAL INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS

Routine Visual Inspection

Routine visual inspection is mandatory on a daily-to-weekly basis and is typically undertaken by staff already on site. It requires inspection for obvious damage, vandalism, surface depth and damage and hazards that may have been introduced into the play area (i.e., broken glass)

Staff should hold as a minimum the Nationally Recognized Training (NRT) AHCPGD212 -

The unit applies to individuals who conduct visual inspections of park facilities under general supervision with limited autonomy or accountability.

Operational Inspection

Operational inspection is mandatory on a Month-Quarter-Term basis and is typically undertaken by staff already on site. It requires inspection of the operation and stability of the equipment by a competent inspector.

Staff should hold as a minimum the Nationally Recognised Training (NRT) AHCPGD311 -

The unit applies to individuals who conduct operational inspection of park facilities under broad direction and take responsibility for their own work and for the quality of the work of others.

Comprehensive Inspection

The comprehensive inspection is mandatory on an annual basis and is typically undertaken by staff already on site, or a maintenance contractor. It requires an **audit** (not certification as staff will be personally liable, and this is undertaken by the various specialists, engineers etc.) of the facility/park, and a review of all specialist inspection and maintenance requirements, reports, and the like, to ensure the entirety of the facility is inspected and maintained in accordance with all relevant standards and best practice. It is undertaken by a competent inspector.

Staff should hold as a minimum the Nationally Recognised Training (NRT) AHCPGD510 –

The unit applies to individuals who apply broad skills and knowledge to conducting comprehensive inspections of park or recreational facilities, take personal responsibility and exercise autonomy in undertaking complex work. They analyse and synthesise information, consult with specialists where required, and communicate solutions to a range of complex problems within their respective organisation.

NOTE:

PlaySafety Training Group strictly follows the course codes set by training.gov.au.

It is the industry best practice to refresh competency of the above units every 3 year to stay up to date with changes to content, legislation, course codes and assessment criteria, along with the safety regulation changes within the period to further mitigate risk.

SPECIALIST (EXTERNAL) INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS

Annual Inspection (Engineer or NATA)

This is different from comprehensive inspection by onsite staff.

Annual inspection of the play facility is to be undertaken yearly, by an external contractor covered by insurance suitable for inspection and certification of a playground. Inspectors are personally liable, and a high level of competency is required to ensure insurance cover can be acquired, maintained and where necessary exercised.

The Contractor is typically an Engineering or NATA-accredited firm.

Impact Testing (Engineer or NATA)

Impact testing of any wet pour rubber surfacing (pour in place) is required to be undertaken every three (3) years, by an external contractor covered by insurance suitable for provision and certification of test results for a playground surface. This includes hybrid surfaces with artificial grass or other types of top layer. Inspectors are personally liable, and a high level of competency is required to ensure insurance cover can be acquired, maintained and where necessary exercised.

The Contractor is typically an Engineering or NATA-accredited firm.

NOTES:

Owner/operators should ensure only a suitably competent firm is used as the industry is unregulated.

Failure by an equipment owner/operator to undertake inspections, including engaging relevant specialist inspections, is considered a breach of duty of care and will not stand up to legal scrutiny.