



**Fixed platforms, walkways, stairways  
and ladders—Design, construction and  
installation**

**STANDARDS**  
Australia

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This Australian Standard® was prepared by Committee SF-013, Platforms, Gangways, Stairways and Ladders. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 22 February 2018.

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The following are represented on Committee SF-013:

- Australian Aluminium Council
  - Australian Building Codes Board
  - Australian Industry Group
  - Australian Rope Access Association
  - Energy Networks Association
  - Engineers Australia
  - SafeWork NSW
  - WorkSafe Victoria
- 

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Standards Australia wishes to acknowledge the participation of the expert individuals that contributed to the development of this Standard through their representation on the Committee and through the public comment period.

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Australian Standard®

**Fixed platforms, walkways, stairways  
and ladders—Design, construction and  
installation**

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## PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by Standards Australia Committee SF-013, Platforms, Gangways, Stairways and Ladders, to supersede AS 1657—2013.

The objective of this Standard is to provide technical specifications and criteria for fixed platforms, walkways, guardrails, stairways, ladders and permanently configured (but movable) platforms that are used in the workplace, to reduce the risks to the safety of users.

The objective of this revision is to clarify a number of clauses where the text was causing some confusion with readers and to improve the clarity of some figures. The bulk of the Standard is not affected by this revision.

Changes in this edition include the following:

- (a) Clarification to the word ‘level’, which generally meant replacing it with less ambiguous words. Definitions for ladder flight and landings have been revised to replace the word ‘level’.
- (b) Figure 5.4(b) has been revised to align with the text of the clause relating to rectangular handrails.
- (c) Clauses 5.6.4 and 5.6.5 have been revised.
- (d) Clause 7.3.6(a) is accompanied by a new figure, which has been included to clarify the ‘length of the landing’.
- (e) Figures 7.5 and 7.9 have been revised to align with the text of the relevant clauses.

Statements expressed in mandatory terms in notes to figures are deemed to be requirements of this Standard.

The terms ‘normative’ and ‘informative’ have been used in this Standard to define the application of the appendix to which they apply. A ‘normative’ appendix is an integral part of a Standard, whereas an ‘informative’ appendix is only for information and guidance.

*This Standard incorporates a Commentary on some of the clauses. The Commentary directly follows the relevant clause, is designated by ‘C’ preceding the clause number and is printed in italics in a panel. The Commentary is intended to help readers understand the background to the clause but does not form part of the clause.*

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## STANDARDS AUSTRALIA

### Australian Standard

## Fixed platforms, walkways, stairways and ladders—Design, construction and installation

### SECTION 1 SCOPE AND GENERAL

#### 1.1 SCOPE

This Standard sets out requirements for the design, selection, construction and installation of fixed platforms, walkways, stairways and ladders that are intended to provide safe access to places used by operating, inspection, maintenance and servicing personnel.

This Standard also applies to the following:

- (a) Movable platforms that are permanently configured but that may be site adjustable or site assembled/modified.
- (b) Permanently installed roof access, where such access is for the purpose of installing, operating, inspecting, maintaining or servicing equipment that is located on, or is accessible from, the roof.
- (c) Permanently installed access for inspection and maintenance of the roof itself.

#### NOTES:

- 1 In the absence of a directly applicable Standard, this Standard may be used for guidance in providing access to some parts of stationary and mobile machinery, light and telecommunication towers, wind turbine towers and water and sewerage facilities. While such access may not be capable of conforming to all the requirements of this Standard, the principles and imposed actions should be followed.
- 2 Appendix A provides information on recommended component dimensions and materials for edge protection.
- 3 Appendix F provides a method for testing the load-carrying capacity of a twin-stile or single-stile fixed ladder.
- 4 Appendix G provides information on selection of stairways, walkways and fixed ladders.
- 5 Appendix H provides guidelines for fall protection measures for various types of ladders.
- 6 Appendix I provides design, fabrication and installation considerations for ladders to improve their safety and reduce the likelihood of injury to users.
- 7 Appendix J provides guidelines for roof access for the purposes of routine equipment or building maintenance activities.

#### 1.2 EXCLUSIONS

This Standard does not apply to the following:

- (a) Scaffolding that may be used in similar situations.
- (b) Access for people with disabilities.
- (c) Temporary access, e.g. by means of portable ladders.
- (d) Access and egress to buildings covered by the National Construction Code (NCC).
- (e) Attic type ladders (see Note 1).
- (f) Access to lift machine rooms (see Note 2).