

Australian/New Zealand Standard™

**Flotation aids for water familiarization  
and swimming tuition**



## **AS/NZS 1900:2014**

This Joint Australian/New Zealand Standard was prepared by Joint Technical Committee CS-021, Swimming Aids. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 29 July 2014 and on behalf of the Council of Standards New Zealand on 13 June 2014.

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The following are represented on Committee CS-021:

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission  
Australian Toy Association  
Austswim  
Choice  
Consumers Federation Australia  
National Retail Association  
NSW Fair Trading  
Royal Life Saving Society, Australia  
Safekids New Zealand  
Swimming Pool and Spa Alliance  
Water Safety New Zealand

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*This Standard was issued in draft form for comment as DR AS/NZS 1900.*

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# Australian/New Zealand Standard™

## Flotation aids for water familiarization and swimming tuition

Originated in Australia as AS 1900—1976.  
Previous edition AS 1900—2002.  
Jointly revised and designated as AS/NZS 1900:2014.  
Reissued incorporating Amendment No. 1 (June 2015).

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## PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Joint Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand Committee CS-021, Swimming Aids, to supersede AS 1900—2002, *Flotation aids for water familiarization and swimming tuition*.

*This Standard incorporates Amendment No. 1 (June 2015). The changes required by the Amendment are indicated in the text by a marginal bar and amendment number against the clause, note, table, figure or part thereof affected.*

The principal difference from the previous edition is a revision of the ‘strength of sewed seams’ and the ‘fastener security’ clauses. These clauses had been causing some concern amongst manufacturers and this prompted the review and subsequent revision of the Standard.

During the review, Committee CS-021 revisited the category of devices covered by the Standard and agreed that flotation toys would remain under the AS/NZS ISO 8124 series, *Safety of toys*, and that unattached flotation devices would still not form part of AS/NZS 1900. In addition, a review of the current European Standards was conducted. The EN 13138 series, *Buoyant aids for swimming instruction*, was considered to be more complex and comprehensive than necessary. It was agreed that AS 1900—2002 be revised rather than to adopt the European Standard.

Other changes of note in this revision include:

- (a) An update of the referenced documents.
- (b) Additional clause on strength of fabric.
- (c) An update to the requirement for threads in load bearing parts so that the use of natural fibres is not allowed.
- (d) A reduction of the leaking/bursting pressure for inflatable flotation aids from 15 kPa to 10 kPa.
- (e) Clarification on strength of sewed seams.
- (f) Additional force requirement for side release fasteners.
- (g) Inclusion of a small parts test.
- (h) A new requirement to ensure that markings are resistant to chlorinated water and ultraviolet light.
- (i) An amendment of the warnings to be consistent with the text specified in EN 13138, however the lettering size remains at a minimum of 6 mm (compared with 5 mm in the European Standard).
- (j) The deletion of cadmium plating as an acceptable coating for metal parts.
- (k) An update to the body mass to age equivalence shown in tables throughout this Standard to more closely align with current averages for body mass based on the age of the intended user.

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.

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## FOREWORD

The main purpose of this revision of AS 1900 was to address concerns in relation to the ‘strength of sewed seams’ and the ‘fastener security’. These clauses have for a number of years been causing some difficulty amongst manufacturers, and Committee CS-021 decided, that while reviewing these clauses, it would also be appropriate to review the whole Standard.

As part of the process the Committee conducted a review of the European Standard EN 13138, *Buoyant aids for swimming instruction*. This 3-part Standard is quite comprehensive and is structured differently to this Standard. The Committee agreed that AS 1900—2002 was working well, apart from one or two clauses, and as there had been no major identified instances of compliant product failures they would revise the current Australian Standard rather than adopt the European Standard.

The Committee agreed that AS/NZS 1900 should continue to focus on the in-water safety of non-swimmers and that the scope of the Standard should remain restricted. The Standard continues to cater only for those flotation aids worn on or attached to the body, or in which the user sits, and are specifically designed to either enable individuals to gain confidence through water familiarization, or to assist them in acquiring unaided buoyancy through swimming tuition.

The reason for the exclusion of flotation toys from this edition of AS/NZS 1900 is that, although such items are unarguably used most of the time to provide flotation assistance, they are first and foremost toys, and should therefore be encompassed within the AS/NZS ISO 8124 series, which was written specifically for toys. Similarly, kickboards and other unattached flotation devices are also excluded from this Standard as such items are generally used either in conjunction with a flotation aid for swimming tuition or as a training aid by people who are able to swim.

This Standard is still aimed primarily at specifying design and performance requirements for manufacturers of flotation aids. The marking requirements are seen by the consumer organizations represented on Committee CS-021 as providing a strong message to the purchasers of these products.

## STANDARDS AUSTRALIA/STANDARDS NEW ZEALAND

**Australian/New Zealand Standard****Flotation aids for water familiarization and swimming tuition**

## SECTION 1 SCOPE AND GENERAL

**1.1 SCOPE**

This Standard specifies requirements for the design, performance and marking of flotation aids worn on or attached to the body or in which the user sits for the purpose of either enabling persons to gain confidence through water familiarization, or to assist them in acquiring unaided buoyancy through swimming tuition.

The Standard does not apply to—

- (a) flotation toys;
- (b) unattached flotation devices;
- (c) articles designed only for therapeutic use;
- (d) articles designed for use by disabled persons; and
- (e) personal flotation devices (PFDs) for use in boating and other recreational water activities.

## NOTES:

- 1 PFDs have different application and are covered by other Standards. In general, the requirements specified in the AS 4758 series are more stringent than those specified herein.
- 2 Appendix F contains a list of typical products covered by this Standard and those that are not.

**1.2 OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this Standard is to provide safety requirements for the manufacture of flotation aids for non-swimmers which assist them in—

- (a) becoming familiarized with water; and
- (b) learning to swim.

**1.3 NORMATIVE REFERENCES**

The following are the normative documents to in this Standard.

NOTE: Documents referenced for informative purposes are listed in Appendix H.

## AS

1192	Electroplated coatings—Nickel and chromium
1789	Electroplated zinc (electrogalvanized) coatings on ferrous articles (batch process)
2001	Methods of test for textiles
2001.2.20	Method 2.20: Physical tests—Determination of seam breaking force
2001.4.3	Method 4.3: Colourfastness tests—Determination of colourfastness to rubbing
2001.4.21	Method 4.21: Colourfastness tests—Determination of colourfastness to light using an artificial light source (mercury vapour, tungsten filament, internally phosphor-coated lamp)