

Balustrades at Multi-level Shopping Centres and Other Workplaces

This *Hazard Alert* is issued to inform persons in control of workplaces about incidents that have occurred in several shopping centres across Australia. However, this hazard is not restricted exclusively to shopping centres. It can be found at any workplace that has a balustrade around edges to prevent falls from one level to another.

Background

Incidents have occurred outside the ACT where children have climbed onto tables or chairs placed next to the balustrade and toppled over the edge to their death. These falls may have been prevented had the tables or chairs been placed at a distance from the railing.

Preventative Measures

Tables, chairs, potted plants or other items, which children could climb or stand upon, should not be located, nor allowed to be moved to within a 900mm radius of the centre line of the top of the balustrade. This 900mm radius should then establish a 'band of safety' in relation to the balustrade.

Designers, manufacturers, owners and installers of a balustrade and tables chairs, plants and so forth, also need to be aware of their obligations in the design and location of such items.

Duties Under the ACT *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1989*

The ACT *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1989 (the Act)* imposes a duty of care upon all parties to ensure, so far as is practicable, the health and safety of everyone (public and employees) who may enter the workplace. Penalties exist for breaches of *the Act*.

