

Comment on: New Zealand Slip Resistance Standard

The current New Zealand standard for Slip Resistance AS/NZS 4586 2004 sets out 3 test methods for evaluating wet slip resistance – Wet Pendulum, Wet/Barefoot Ramp Test, Oil-Wet Ramp Test – and these shall be used “for all external pedestrian surfaces and those internal pedestrian surfaces that have a reasonably foreseeable risk of the presence of wet substances such as water, grease and oil”

The standard should be read in conjunction with the handbook HB 197, ***an introductory guide to the slip resistance of pedestrian surface materials***. HB 197 provides guidelines for the selection of slip resistant pedestrian surfaces classified in accordance with the standard.

Standard AS/NZS 4586 establishes a major change in philosophy. The previous standard AS/NZS 3661.1 required all slip resistant pedestrian surfaces to have a mean coefficient of friction of 0.4 when tested using the wet pendulum and dry floor friction tester. In other words it used a universal minimum standard to differentiate safe and unsafe surfaces. AS/NZS 4586 rejects this concept. Instead it embraces the logical and practical fact that there are other factors influencing slip resistance. For instance the intended activity, type of footwear and type of contamination all have an influence such that you cannot expect a product that is safe in a domestic kitchen to be necessarily safe in a commercial kitchen. Therefore the new standard moves from the old line in the sand concept to one of a guideline and leaves the ultimate selection to the designer, client or specifier.

The slip resistant certificates published on our web site for our materials should be used in conjunction with these standards and guidelines. For most domestic situations the guidelines recommend a minimum R9 rating. For the majority of commercial situations they recommend a R10 rating. However in all cases the specific charts in HB 197:1999 should be consulted to ascertain the correct material for the specific area and purpose.