Customer & Architectural Fact Sheet

Risk management and compliance considerations in glass

Not all glass and associated materials are the same!

Following the 2025 closure of Australia's only on-shore manufacturer (Oceania Glass), the Australian glass industry has transitioned to a 100% import-dependent model. This, along with the growth of Chinese imports from a vast array of relatively unknown suppliers, is seeing significant quality and compliance risks being realised across the country.

Key considerations for specifiers, window companies, property managers and end consumers when selecting glass products may include:

Considerations	Risk
All Glass Types	
Does the manufacturer or supplier provide consistency of product?	Lower grade / quality glass can see variation in the appearance, quality, colour and tone by batch, even within the same technical specification.
Is the glass a specified or known product?	Some glass suppliers use multiple manufacturers or products to supply a single glass type, resulting in inconsistencies in appearance.
Is product traceability present at all stages of the production lifecycle?	Industry standards and legal process requires traceability in the event of major failure, injury or human harm.
Can I source this glass in the future for replacement or scope expansion?	While some glass types from major manufacturers have stood the test of time, others come and go. Some imported types cannot be replicated with locally available product.
Who is the manufacturer or processor?	Supply of discontinued or unknown glass types, or inconsistent manufacturing processes, can create significant future issues for replacement in commercial glazing.
Toughened Glass	
Is the certification on the glass genuine?	There is serious risk of human harm or death in the event of non-toughened or incorrectly toughened glass breakage.
Is the manufacturer's process audited to meet Australian standards? Does the manufacturer test and calibrate to meet required standards?	Non-compliant product may prevent building certification. Toughened and laminated glass must be produced to AS/NZS 2208 which requires established and ongoing quality testing processes during production and audit / certification.

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Considerations	Risk
Laminated & Hard Coat Glass	
What is the origin, type and manufacturer of the glass?	Some manufacturers and suppliers are unable to provide ongoing consistency of appearance for laminated and hard coat glass – in some cases, this is only noticed once installed in direct sunlight.
Has a reputable / quality interlayer been used?	Poor quality (and often recycled) laminated interlayers can discolour, separate and fail. These may also fail to resist UV, providing unstable colouring.
Has the interlayer, laminate or processor correctly tested to the required standard?	Sub-standard interlayers may fail more readily, or not meet the required load or fire rating.
Mirror	
Is the mirror actually made with silver metals?	Aluminium mirrors (increasing in prevalence in the Australian market) cannot resist corrosion and will deteriorate very rapidly in moist environments (such as bathrooms). These inferior quality mirrors typically lack coating durability and can easily scratch, further accelerating their failure.
Is a manufacturer's warranty present?	Mirror products used in bathrooms or wet areas require at least a 2-year manufacturer's warranty to avoid customer claims.
To what standard has the silver and other coatings been applied?	Inferior quality mirrors will deteriorate rapidly when exposed to moisture (often within 12 months) or can interact negatively with certain adhesives.
Custom Laminates as Barriers	
Has the correct interlayer been used?	Incorrect interlayer selection and application will fail to meet Australian standards and could result in human harm or death from failure of the glass when used as a barrier. Failure to use the correct interlayer or certified glass will breach compliance with AS 1288. Laminated glass that has been heat soaked must also comply with EN 14179.
Double Glazing	
Has the processor been certified to manufacture double glazed units?	Poor quality units may fail early in service life, allowing moisture ingress, escape of argon gas, deterioration of any soft-coat and / or failure of the overall unit integrity. Double glazed units must be manufactured to AS 4666 and have the manufacturing process independently audited.
What spacer and manufacturing technology is being used?	Hand / manually assembled units may be more likely to fail. Not all spacer technologies may be available in WA for replacement / warranty units.
How long is the warranty?	Warranty periods of fewer than 10 years on double glazing may expose construction partners to customer claims if inferior quality units are supplied.
Is the unit argon gas filled?	Some manufacturers may simply leave air inside, reducing unit efficiency.
What replacement options are available?	Sourcing of replacements for failed imported double glazed units can be very difficult, and in some cases not possible.

Good to know

Walshs Glass only uses tested glass and component products from our trusted long-term supply chain partners including Guardian, AGC, Saint-Gobain and Glasshape for glass and Eastman, Kuraray and Kömmerling for interlayers and chemical component products.

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