

## FACT SHEET

### AUSTRALIAN POOL FENCING RULES - AN OVERVIEW

#### Australian Standard AS1926.1 - Safety Barriers for Swimming Pools

The current Australian Standard AS1926-2012 (the standard) is in place as the standard in NSW, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia and the ACT. In these jurisdictions, the standard is called up by the Building Code of Australia (BCA) and in many cases, there are local variations effected under legislation. Northern Territory operates under AS1926.1 – 1993.

Queensland has its own standard in place which is a modified version of AS 1926-2007 combined with a state standard QDC MP 3.4.

All jurisdictions other than Queensland have in place multiple Standards in the sense that as new standards have been adopted existing pools conforming to the then current Standard have been allowed to maintain conformity with that standard. Pool owners may continue to comply with the Standard that their pool was constructed. under on the provision that there have not been any substantial changes to the barrier. If substantial changes have been made then the pool owner is required to comply with the most up to date Standard.

#### Exemptions from the standard

There are two categories of exemptions to the national Standard:

- Those that are effected through the BCA as a variation to the standard as it applies in a particular jurisdiction
- Legislative exemptions to the application of the legislation.

In NSW, there are two cases of the first category of variation:

- NSW spas are provided with an alternative to pool fencing and may have a lockable lid that is capable of being operated by one person and must be locked when the spa is not in use.
- NSW does not permit an out of ground wall of a pool to be used as a pool barrier.

These NSW variations do not apply in other jurisdictions where fencing is required for spa pools, and out of ground wall of a pool can be used as a barrier if they meet the requirements of the Standard.

There are also exemptions applying to particular types of properties with pools in a number of jurisdictions. These apply in NSW (historic exemptions for small, large and waterfront properties), Tasmania (pools built before 1 November 1994), the ACT (pools built before 1970) and the Northern Territory (pools built prior to 1 January 2003 and pools on small and large properties).

Local councils have the power in NSW, Queensland and Western Australia to approve alternate barriers that can be demonstrated to provide the same safety as an AS1926.1 barrier.

#### Australian Standard AS1926.1 - 2012 Version

#### Pool Fence – Height

*Australian Standard AS 1926.1 - 2012 stipulates that a pool fence shall be not less than 1.2m high all the way around.*

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**Note:** If the pool barrier is not 1.2m high all the way around or only in some sections then the home owner should seek immediate advice from a Licensed Builder, Pool Technician or Fencing Contractor.

### Pool Fence - Non Climable Zone (NCZ)

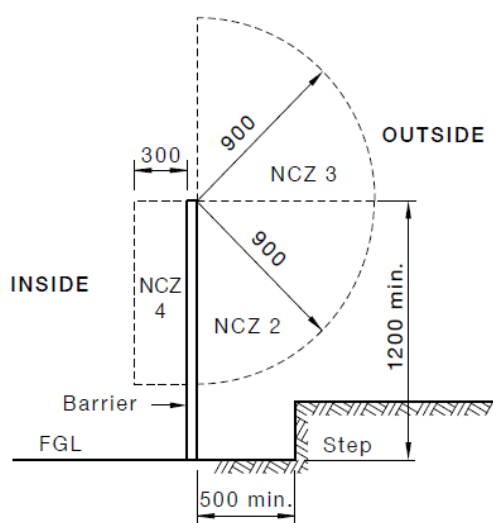
Australian Standard AS 1926.1- 2012 stipulates that a fence must have a Non Climable Zone (NCZ) of 900mm on the outside of the pool fence all the way around.

**Note:** Trim trees or shrubs near the pool fence and other objects such as BBQ, pot plants, toys, ladders and chairs should not encroach within the NCZ area.

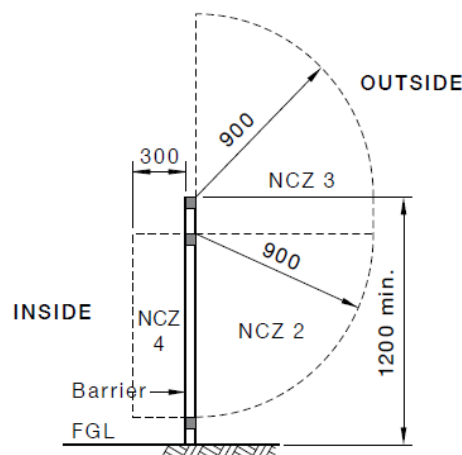
The following NCZs shall be present on all barriers with a height less than 1800 mm:

- NCZ 1** is a 900 mm vertical plane on the outside face of a barrier. This NCZ may be located anywhere within the perpendicular height of a barrier or, where present, anywhere between horizontal components or handholds and footholds on a barrier
- NCZ 2** is a quadrant on the outside of a barrier created by a 900 mm radius down from the top of NCZ 1 above
- NCZ 3** is a quadrant on the outside of a barrier created by a 900 mm radius up from the top of the barrier. When the top of NCZ 1 is below the top of a barrier then NCZ 3 shall extend vertically down to the top of NCZ 1 (see Figures 2.1 and 2.11). NCZ 3 is applicable only to the space created by the quadrant and does not apply to any item or component on, or that is part of, the barrier
- NCZ 4** is required on all barriers with vertical openings 10–100 mm in width and is a 900 mm high by 300 mm deep rectangular space on the inside of the barrier and shall align with NCZ 1

**Note:** NCZ 2 is always immediately adjacent to NCZ 1 on all barriers.



(a) NCZ 2 at top of barrier



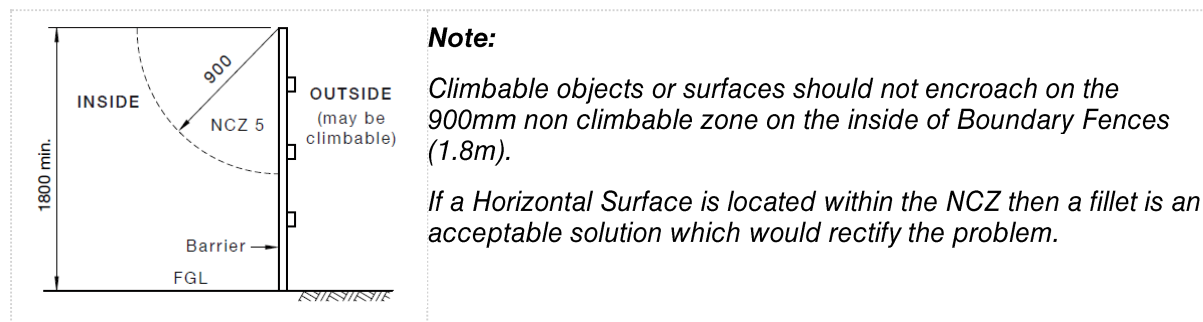
(b) NCZ 2 in middle of barrier

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## Boundary Fence used as part of Pool Fence

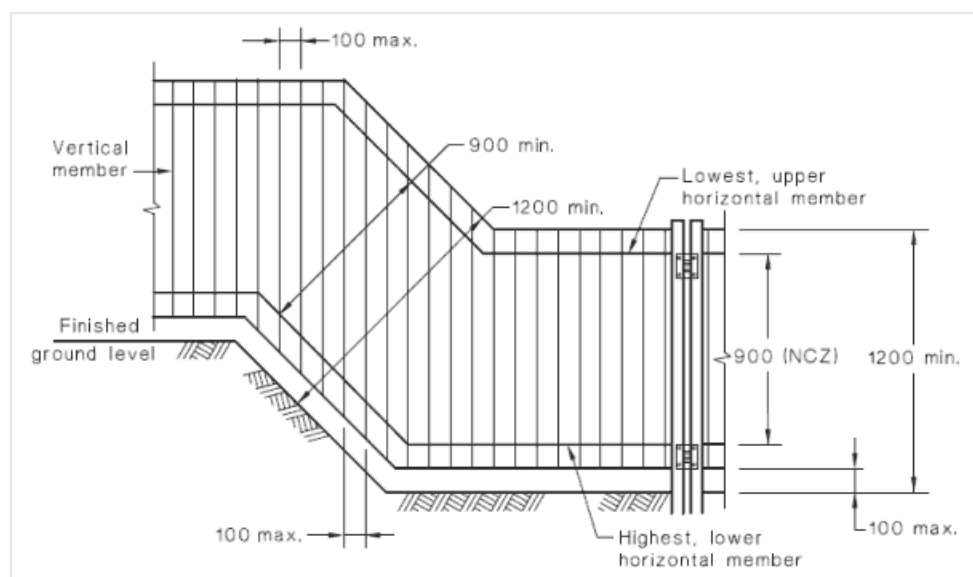
Australian Standard 1926.1 - 2012 stipulates that when a Boundary Fence (min 1.8m) is used as part of the child-resistant barrier then the Non Climbable Zone (NCZ) of 900mm will be measured from the inside (pool side) of the fence.



## Pool Fence - Vertical Gaps

Australian Standard AS 1926.1 - 2012 stipulates that gaps between vertical members of the fence shall not be greater than 100mm,

Vertical Gaps in the fence must not be more than 100mm.



**Note:** If the Vertical Gaps in the fence are greater than 100mm all the way around or only in some sections then the home owner should seek immediate advice from a Licensed Builder, Pool Technician or Fencing Contractor.

## Pool Fence - Gap at Bottom

Australian Standard AS 1926.1 - 2012 stipulates that the Gap at the bottom of the fence must be a maximum of 100mm.

If the Gap at the bottom of the fence is greater than 100mm all the way around or only in some sections then the home owner should seek immediate advice from a Licensed Builder, Pool Technician or Fencing Contractor.

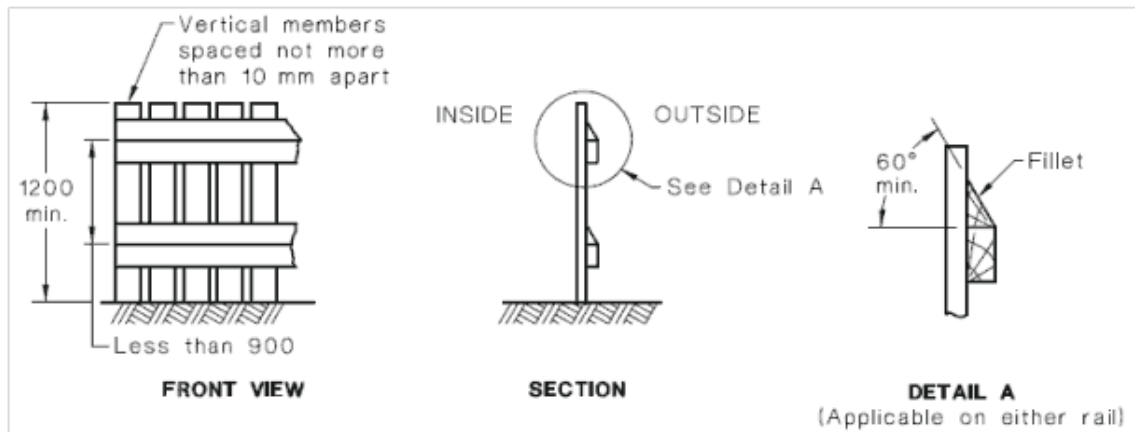
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### Pool Fence - Horizontal Climable Members

Australian Standard AS 1926.1 - 2012 stipulates that Horizontal Members shall not be within the 900mm Non Climbable Zone (NCZ) (on the outside of the pool fence).

If a pool fence does have Horizontal Members on the pool fence then they must be Non Climbable.



**Note:** If the Horizontal Members which form part of the fence are in the Non Climbable Zone (NCZ) all the way around or only in some sections then the home owner should seek immediate advice from a Licensed Builder, Pool Technician or Fencing Contractor.

### Pool Gates - Self Closing & Latching Devices

Australian Standard AS 1926.1 - 2012 stipulates that Gates shall be hung so that they ONLY swing outwards. i.e. away from the pool area. The gate must be able to swing freely through its arc of operation.

All gates must be fitted with a **Self-Closing Device** that will return the gate to a closed position from any position without the use of manual force.

All Gates must be fitted with a **Latching Device** that will automatically operate on the closing of the gate and prevent the gate from being reopened without being manually released

**Note:** A Pool Gate that is not Self Closing or does not have a Latching Device should be permanently secured until such time as the device/s can be installed. Self-Closing and Latching Devices can be purchased from most pool shops and hardware shops and are relatively easy to install.

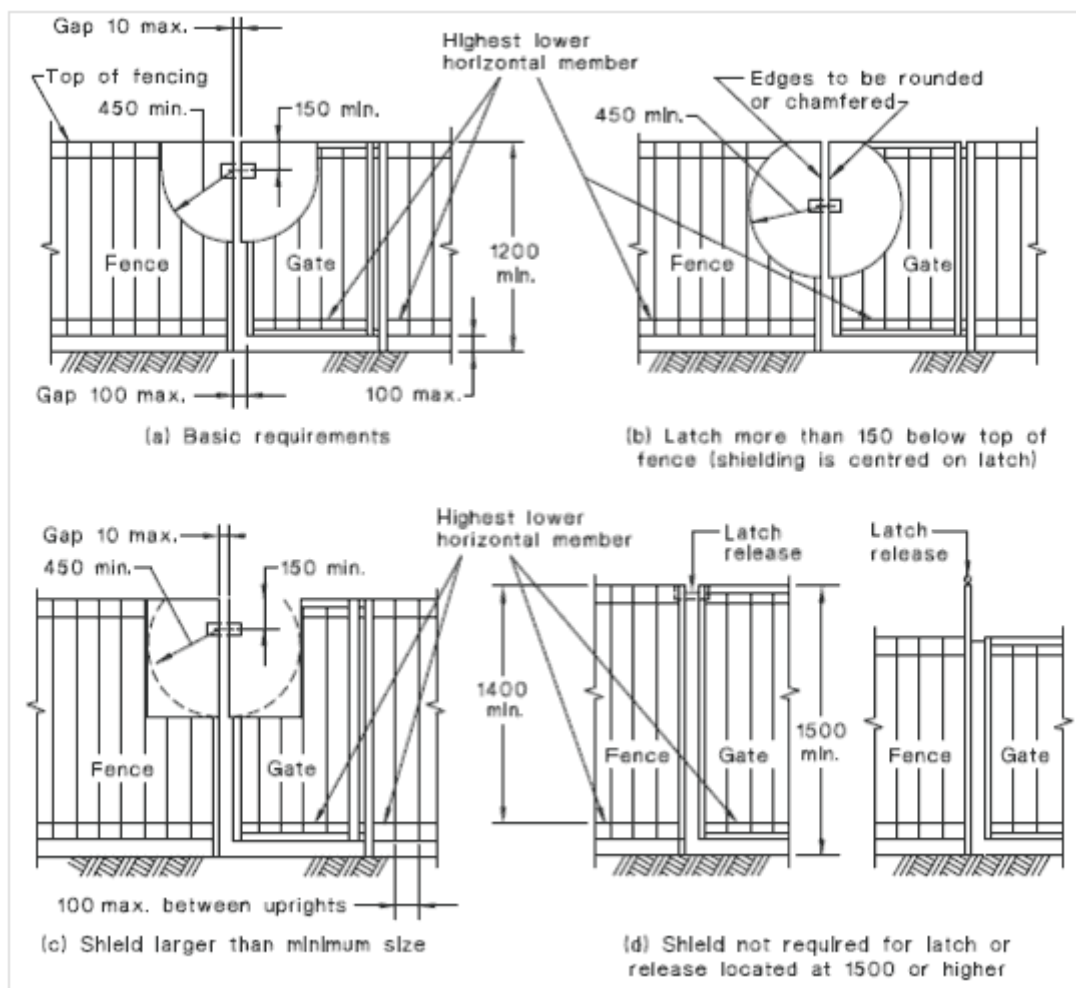
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## Pool Fence - Latching Device Location

Australian Standard AS 1926.1 - 2012 stipulates Latching Device Locations. Acceptable basic Latching Device Locations are:

Where a latching device is located less than 1500mm then the following applies:



**Note:** A Pool Gate which has its Latching Device at the incorrect location can easily be relocated with the use of some very basic tools to the correct location. If in doubt, consumers should be encouraged to seek the advice and/or services of a Licensed Builder, Pool Technician or Fencing Contractor.

## Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Signage Requirements

Knowing CPR can save lives and can help to reduce serious water related incidents.

CPR signage placed in the pool or spa area is not only a good way to constantly remind you of what to do in the event of an emergency but it is a legislated requirement in many states of Australia.

In January 2016, the Australian Resuscitation Council (ARC) released the Australian and New Zealand Committee on Resuscitation (ANZCOR) Guidelines for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). Signage setting out pool safety and CPR is legislated in NSW and Queensland. Whilst not legislated, all other jurisdictions actively observe the ANZCOR guidelines and CPR signs are installed in all pools and spas.

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Compliant CPR signs detail the DRSABCD first aid method.

**D** Danger? – Check for danger to yourself, the patient and bystanders.

**R** Response? – Check the patient for response by talk (i.e. ask name) and touch (i.e. squeeze shoulders).

**S** Send for help – if unresponsive send for help by calling triple zero (000). Stay with the patient until qualified personnel arrive.

**A** Airway – open airway and ensure it is clear. If not, roll the patient onto their side and clear the airway.

**B** Breathing – Check for breathing (look, listen and feel). If the patient is not breathing normally then start CPR.

**C** CPR – Start CPR (30 chest compressions: 2 rescue breaths) and continue until help arrives or patient recovers.

**D** Defibrillator - Apply if available and follow prompts.

### Swimming Pool Registers

There is a central swimming pool register in NSW, Queensland and the Northern Territory. In Western Australia, each council maintains a register of all swimming pools in its area, as local councils are responsible for managing the swimming pool inspection program.

The ACT and Victorian Government are considering introducing similar registers.

### Pool Compliance Inspections

It is a pool owner's responsibility to ensure their pool and/or spa barrier is compliant before selling or leasing their property, however there is a wide range of how the regulator in each jurisdiction oversees this area.

Region	Inspections (existing pools)	Inspections (selling/leasing)
NSW*	No	Yes
Victoria	No	No
Queensland	No	Yes
South Australia	No	Yes
Tasmania	No	No
ACT	No	No
Northern Territory#	No	#Yes
Western Australia^	^Yes	No

*\*NSW has a compulsory inspection program for pools in properties for sale or lease only although some councils have the power to undertake such inspections.*

*#In the Northern Territory, you are required to make compliance declarations to the land titles office if you are selling or leasing a property less than 1.8 hectares with a pool or spa.*

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*^Western Australia has an inspection regime conducted by local government whereby all pools are inspected each four years for compliance. The program is conducted by the local council using either council officers or contracted inspectors.*

## Spa Pools

The relevant Australian Standard for spa pools in a private setting is AS2610.2 – 2007 Private Spas. Under these Standard suppliers of spa pools must provide the following information to the purchaser:

1. A recommendation that owners of spa pools learn a recognized resuscitation technique.
2. Safety rules for the use of the spa pool which should include the following:

### Spa Pool Safety Rules

1. This spa pool is a heated water environment and if you are concerned that it may adversely affect you it is your responsibility to seek medical advice.
2. NEVER PUT HEAD UNDER WATER.
3. Children under 10 years should be under the active supervision of a person 16 years or older whilst in spa pool area.
4. Do not use the spa pool area while under the influence of drugs or alcohol (certain medications may produce adverse effects).
5. It is safer not to use the spa pool alone.
6. It is recommended that you use the spa pool for no longer than 15 minutes at a time.

*Note: Spa pools used in commercial environments rely on AS2610.2 – 2007 Public Spas.*

## Swimming Pool and Spa Water Circulation

All Australian swimming pools and spas must comply with Australian Standard AS1926.3 - 2010 Swimming pool safety - Water recirculation systems.

South Australia has introduced a state specific variation to the standard which is mandatory to ensure compliance in that state.

This standard is all about the safe circulation of water throughout the pool and/or spa via the pump and outlets to ensure the possibility of injuries that may be caused by mechanical, body, limb and hair entrapment are minimised.

The technical requirements within the standard ensures the safety of pool and spa users by reducing the possibility of injuries occurring that may be caused by mechanical, body, limb and hair entrapment via the pool and spa suction outlets.

## Pool Owner Swimming Pool Safety

The backyard swimming pool is an Australian icon that for many years has provided good times and healthy recreation for people of all ages.

While swimming pools allow us to get together with our friends and family to share fun, fitness and relaxation, they can also pose a risk. There are some easy to remember rules that need to be followed to ensure the safe use of swimming pools and spas at all times. SPASA recommends these safety guidelines be followed always:

- Make sure your pool or spa has compliant fencing or in NSW childproof locking on the spa.
- Always remember that a swimming pool fence is not a substitute for supervision.
- Supervise children at all times around water. If you need to leave the pool or water area, even for a moment, take the child with you.
- Familiarise children with water by taking them to swimming lessons at the local pool.

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- Display a resuscitation chart on your pool fence and take a CPR course so you will know what to do in an emergency.
- Most backyard pools are too shallow for diving. Place “No Diving” signs prominently around your pool.
- Don’t leave furniture or other items accessible that children can climb on near your pool or spa fence.
- Be aware that hair, bathing suit strings and tassels or body parts can become entangled in an improperly covered drain or suction point.
- Empty paddling pools, baths, basins, sinks and troughs when they are not in use.
- Alcohol and swimming don’t mix. Never drink around water.

For more information visit:

Swimming Pool and Spa Association of Australia (SPASA)	<a href="http://www.spasa.com.au">www.spasa.com.au</a>
Australian Resuscitation Council (ARC):	<a href="http://www.resus.org.au">www.resus.org.au</a>
Royal Life Saving Society of Australia (RLSSA):	<a href="http://www.royallifesaving.com.au">www.royallifesaving.com.au</a>
NSW – Office of Local Government:	<a href="http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au">www.olg.nsw.gov.au</a>
QLD - Queensland Building and Construction Commission:	<a href="http://www.qbcc.qld.gov.au">www.qbcc.qld.gov.au</a>
SA – Department of Planning, Transport & Infrastructure:	<a href="http://www.sa.gov.au">www.sa.gov.au</a>
Tasmania - Consumer Affairs and Trading:	<a href="http://www.consumer.tas.gov.au">www.consumer.tas.gov.au</a>
WA - Australia Department of Commerce:	<a href="http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au">www.commerce.wa.gov.au</a>
NT - Government information and services:	<a href="http://www.nt.gov.au">www.nt.gov.au</a>
VIC - Victorian Building Authority	<a href="http://www.vba.vic.gov.au">www.vba.vic.gov.au</a>
ACT – <i>Environ, Planning &amp; Sustainable Development Directorate</i>	<a href="http://www.planning.act.gov.au">www.planning.act.gov.au</a>
Australian Competition & Consumer Commission	<a href="http://www.accc.gov.au">www.accc.gov.au</a>

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