



Infrastructure access paths: Flange Gaps

Flange gaps on access paths present a safety risk to the safe passage of people with disability. Despite this, there is a lack of certainty for operators and providers on their compliance obligations. There is an opportunity to recognise flange gaps within access paths at level crossings on train, light rail, and tram networks, ensuring the gap is safe for people with disability.

Reform options

Maintain current requirements in the Transport Standards

The Transport Standards would remain unchanged and no new guidance would be issued.

Non-regulatory option

Guidance would be provided to include advice on flange gap filler products and to promote the safe traversing of level crossings for people who use mobility devices, those who have low vision or are blind or utilise a cane, cyclists, those with prams and luggage. This guidance should ensure that until a new 'flange gap filler' product is regulated and rolled out across the rail networks, public transport operators and providers are able to provide appropriate information and guidance to persons with mobility devices to improve their knowledge of how to safely cross access paths at level crossings that have not had a 'flange gap filler' product installed.

Specific guidance for operators and providers may include:

- Upgrading and removing railway level crossings where possible
- Research and trials of new 'flange gap filler' products and technology
- Flange gap at level crossings design
- Consulting the community

Regulatory option

The Transport Standards would be amended to include new requirements that recognise flange gaps within access paths at level crossings, encourage that they only be used where necessary, and encourage flange gap filler products be used where available. Two regulatory options are proposed for consideration.

There are two regulatory options presented:

Option 1

The Transport Standards would include the following new requirements:

- Where possible, level crossings must not form part of an access path, thereby removing the safety risk for people getting stuck in the flange gap while traversing a level crossing.
- Where a 'flange gap filler' product or technology has been approved by the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator for each mode of transport, it must be used to eliminate, or if not feasible, reduce the gap to be no greater than 40 millimetres.

These requirements would apply to premises (except premises to which the Premises Standards apply), and infrastructure (except airports provides that do not accept regular public transport services).

Option 2

The Transport Standards may also include the following new requirement:

- Where possible, level crossings must not form part of an access path, thereby removing the safety risk for people getting stuck in the flange gap while traversing a level crossing.
- Where a 'flange gap filler' product or technology has been approved by the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator for each mode of transport, it must be used to eliminate, or if not feasible, reduce the gap to be no greater than 40mm.
- Where an access path must be provided at a level crossing, the flange gaps at the level crossing must comply with AS1742.7 *Manual of uniform of traffic control devices*, which stipulates that flange gaps must be constructed to no wider than 65 millimetres for newly constructed level crossings and maintained to a maximum width of 75 millimetres and have a maximum depth of 50 millimetres.

These requirements would apply to premises (except premises to which the Premises Standards apply), and infrastructure (except airports provides that do not accept regular public transport services).

The Transport Standards Guidelines and /or The Whole Journey Guide would be updated to reflect the new requirements for both options.

Have your say

Public consultation on the Stage 2 reform of the Transport Standards will open from 15 March to 9 August 2022.

For further information:

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- **Survey:** <https://edm.infrastructure.gov.au/survey.php?sid=28679&name=flange-gaps>