

# KEY MESSAGE

## FALL PREVENTION AND THE PROTECTION OF OPENABLE WINDOWS

The National Construction Code specifies various requirements for the prevention of falls from openable windows. The intent of these requirements is to limit the risk of a person (especially a young child) falling through an openable window, and are divided into two categories;

1. All windows where the potential fall is four metres or more.
2. Windows in bedrooms of Class 1, 2, 3 and 4 buildings, and any room in Class 9b Early Child Care Centres where the potential fall is two metres or more.

### A window opening must be provided with protection where people could fall:

- Two metres or more from a floor through an openable window in a bedroom or any room in a class 9b child care facility or strata title unit in NSW,  
or
- Four metres or more from a floor through an openable window in any other room.

### Generally, the options provided by the NCC that are deemed to provide protection are:

- A fixed device attached to the openable part of a window,  
or
- A fixed screen across the openable part of a window.

### In either case, the device or screen must:

- Restrict any openings of the window or screen so that a 125 mm sphere cannot pass through,  
and
- Resist an outward horizontal action of 250 N against the window being restrained by the device or screen.

### It is permissible that a child resistant release mechanism be fitted so that the restriction may be removed, unlocked or overridden provided that:

- the opening is more than 865 mm from the floor and does not have any horizontal or near horizontal elements between 150 mm and 760 mm above the floor that can facilitate climbing.  
or
- a barrier no less than 865 mm high is installed that does not permit a 125 mm sphere to pass through it and does not have any horizontal or near horizontal elements between 150 mm and 760 mm above the floor that facilitate climbing.

### IMPORTANT NOTES:

1. It is the responsibility of the person fitting the device or screen to verify that it meets these requirements and provide evidence of compliance.
2. In the NSW Strata Schemes Management Regulation 2016, protection to windows in **any** room where the potential fall is over two metres is required.

### AS 5203 Protection of Openable Windows/Fall Prevention - Test Sequence and Compliance Method

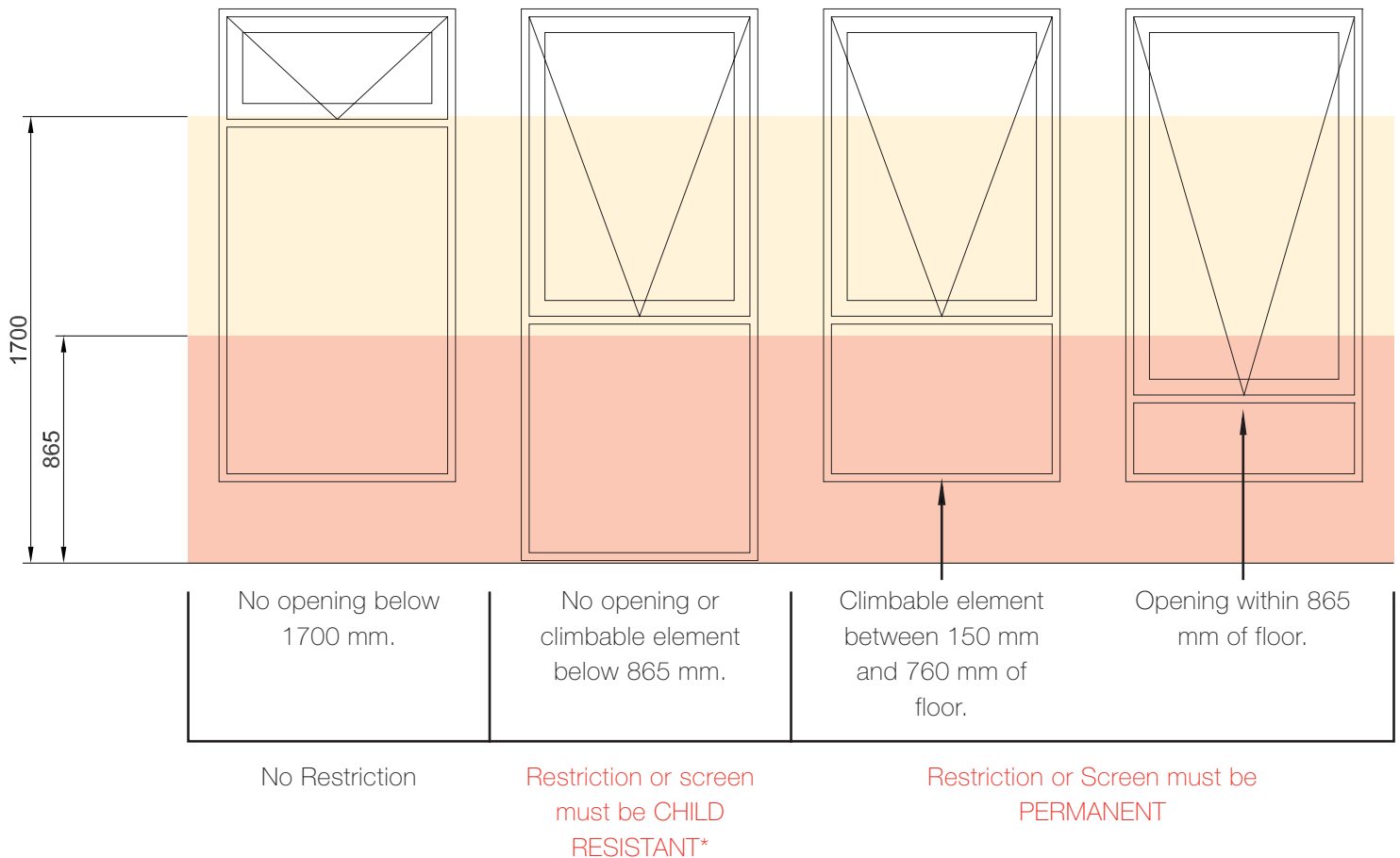
is the standard that sets out methods of test for determining the performance of a barrier screen and a restricted window opening to a level of force specified in the NCC.



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Figure 1 Fall Prevention Requirements.



\*Note: Only applicable in a bedroom or Class 9b Child Care Centre.

**CHILD RESISTANT** means that a key, Allen key, screwdriver, spanner or the coordinated use of two hands is required to open the window beyond 125 mm.

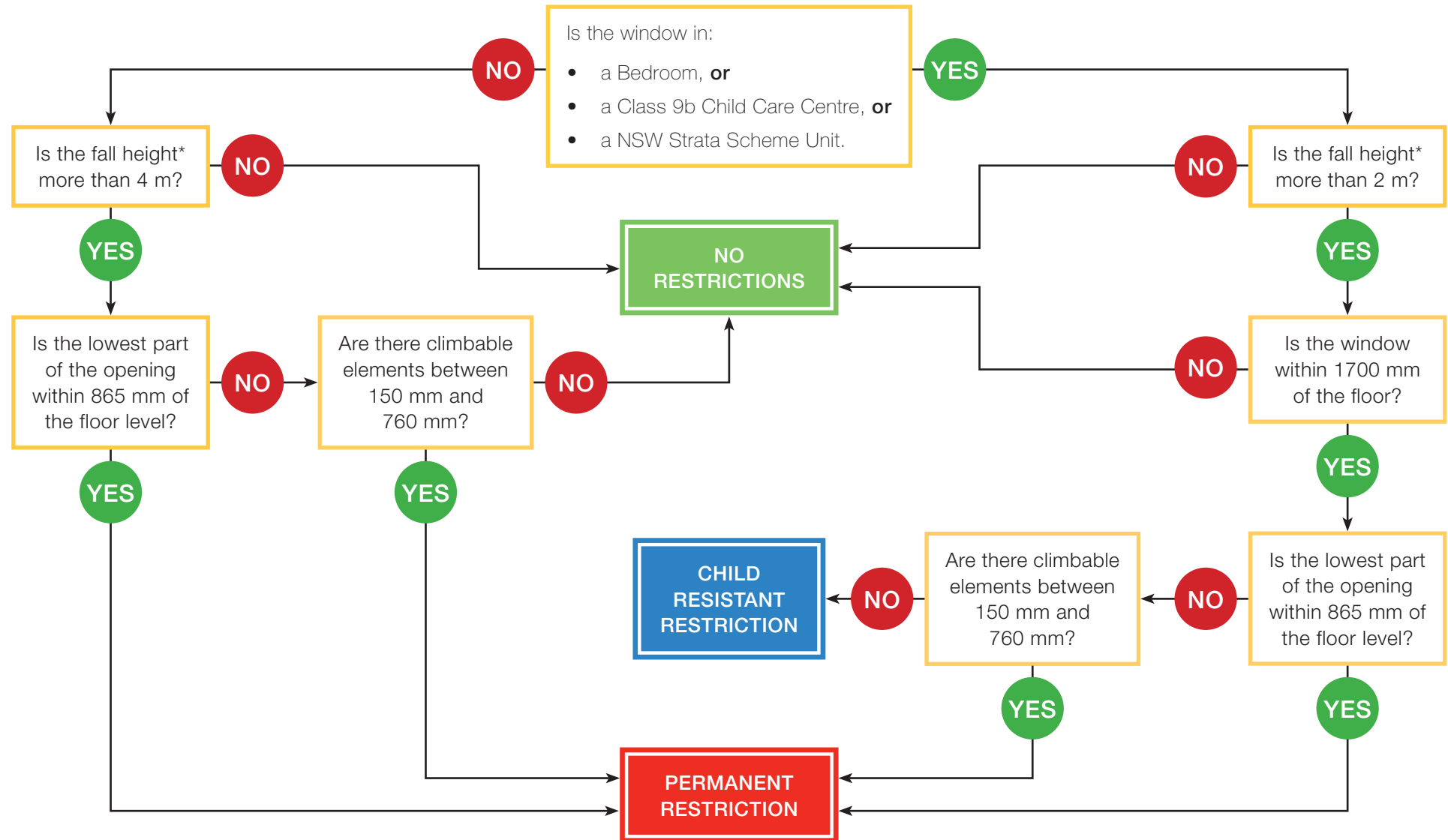
**PERMANENT** means that a restrictor or screen is securely fixed in position (e.g. a screen pop riveted to the window frame) so it cannot be unlocked, overridden, or is very difficult to remove without, for example, a drill.

### DISCLAIMER:

This key message has been developed to provide general guidance, awareness and education to AWA members only. It should not be viewed as a definitive guide and should be read in conjunction with the National Construction Code. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the information is accurate the AWA expressly disclaims all and any liability to any person for anything done in reliance on this publication. No responsibility is accepted by the AWA for any mistakes, errors or omissions in this publication.

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Figure 2 Flowchart to Determine Fall Prevention Requirements as Prescribed by the National Construction Code.



\* Measured from the floor.

**NOTE:** The NSW Strata Scheme does not require devices to be permanent.