

THE MYTHS OF SAFETY WIRE MESH

A common question we are asked is: **“Is the safety wire mesh under our skylights sufficient protection and does it comply?”**

This is a complex question to answer as there are many factors that come into play. The outcome is questionable which still leaves the building owner anxious and exposed to risk in time.

Safety wire mesh is designed to prevent falls through roofs however, skylights are dangerous and have been the cause of many fatalities over the years. Most skylights degrade with age caused by exposed sunlight over a period of time.

If your skylights have safety wire mesh installed, you need to be asking yourself these three questions ...

1. DOES YOUR MESH COMPLY?

Safety wire mesh needs to comply with the Australian Standard AS/NZS 4389 Safety Mesh, which specifies the minimum requirement for the design, construction, testing and installation of the product.

2. IS IT STRUCTURALLY SOUND?

If your wire mesh is not stainless steel, like some are, you need to check if it has corroded. What is the age of the wire mesh? What is the atmosphere and environment that it has been exposed to?

3. HAS IT BEEN INSTALLED CORRECTLY?

Worksafe provide detailed information on the method of installation for safety wire mesh. The mesh needs to be securely connected, overlapped and joined in order to arrest a fall.

There are other factors that we need to consider.

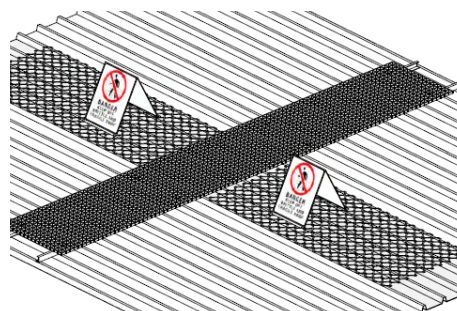
The Compliance Code and “Prevention of Falls in General Construction” document states the following:

- Where new or existing safety mesh is to be used to control the risk of workers falling, the integrity of the mesh and its fixings needs to be verified by a competent person prior to use.
- Safety mesh does not control the risk of falling from the perimeter or through penetration hazards. Therefore, safety mesh always needs to be used with appropriate edge protection, guardrails or fall arrest systems and devices.
- Safety mesh does not prevent falls from the edge of a roof or through unmeshed holes in a roof, so it needs to always be used in conjunction with appropriate edge protection such as guardrailing or, where passive fall prevention devices are not reasonably practicable, safety harness systems.
- Safety mesh is not a working platform in its own right, and should not be walked on where it spans purlins.
- Where it is necessary for work to be carried out on a roof containing fragile materials, the employer needs to ensure that the underside of the roof is inspected to determine the extent of fragile roof material, the existence of any safety mesh and the structural soundness of the roof, any safety mesh and its fixings.

The need for skylight protection is widely ignored.

It is ultimately the employer’s responsibility to ensure all the above is up to the required standard.

Sayfa provide **skylight protectors and crossover** options to provide easy access with peace of mind. They are visible and can be easily inspected. The unique stainless steel clip and structural fixing has been static load tested to over 300kg.



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SAFETY MESH REQUIREMENTS

