

Respiratory Protective Devices

Selection Use & Maintenance Equivalence for Workplaces - AS/NZS 1715 compared to SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975.1 & .2

For many years, the primary respiratory protection standard used across Australian workplaces has been **AS/NZS 1715:2009**, *Selection, use and maintenance of respiratory protective equipment*. Together with **AS/NZS 1716:2012**, the associated performance testing standard, it has formed the foundation of Respiratory Protection Programs (RPPs) and respiratory protective devices (RPD) throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Both **AS/NZS 1715:2009** and **AS/NZS 1716:2012** are planned to be **superseded in 2030** and will be progressively replaced by the **AS/NZS ISO suite of respiratory protection standards**, which will be adopted in parallel across both jurisdictions over the coming years. As this transition unfolds, **regulators, employers, safety professionals, Occupational Hygienists**, and others involved in RPP design and implementation will need to understand how the new AS/NZS ISO-aligned framework compares with the long-standing AS/NZS approach. A comparative table of key elements is provided below.

The AS/NZS ISO-aligned counterpart to AS/NZS 1715 is **SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1:2023**, a comprehensive 75-page document. For organisations seeking a more concise overview, **SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-2:2023** offers a shorter 15-page summary. While both documents cover the same core concepts, SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1 provides more detailed guidance across all topics.

Although the fundamental principles of respirator selection remain consistent between AS/NZS 1715 and SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1 and SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-2, the ISO standards introduce important differences in areas such as product performance requirements, device classification, terminology, and marking. These distinctions must be considered when selecting AS/NZS ISO-compliant respiratory protective devices.

Despite these changes, there is substantial continuity between the standards. AS/NZS 1715 and SA/NZS TS ISO 16975-1 share many common elements essential to an effective Respiratory Protection Program. However, the ISO framework introduces new device categories and performance ratings that users will need to become familiar with as the transition progresses.

AS/NZS 1715 Clause Number	SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1:2023 Reference	SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-2:2023 Reference	COMMENTS
SECTION 1 SCOPE AND GENERAL			
1.1 Scope	Preface & Clause 1	Preface & Clause 1	
1.2 Objective	Preface page ii & Introduction page vi	Preface page ii & Introduction page v	
1.3 Referenced Documents	Clause 2 Normative References	Clause 2 Normative References	
1.4 Related Documents	Clause 2 Normative References	Clause 2 Normative References	
1.5 Definitions	Clause 3 Terms and Definitions	Refer to AS/SNZ TS ISO 16972 & SA/SNZ TS 16975-1	
1.6 General Principles	Clause 5	Clause 4.1	
1.7 Hazard Identification, Risk assessment and Control	Clause 7.1	Clause 4.2	
SECTION 2 RESPIRATORY PROTECTION PROGRAM	Clause 6	Clauses 5-10	
2.1 RESPIRATORY PROTECTION PROGRAM	Clause 6.1	Clause 5 Table 1	The required elements of a respiratory protection program are essentially the same for all these documents.

2.2 APPOINTMENT OF PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR	Clause 6.3	Clause 9	SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1 describes clear roles and responsibilities for employer, administrator and wearer. SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-2 is more broad - about overarching management
2.3 SELECTION OF RPE	Clause 7.1 - 7.3	Clause 6.1 - 6.11	SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1 gives expansive information and selection flow charts to assist the selection process as well as expanded information on Special Classes (eg Firefighting, welding, Escape and others). Both SA/SNZ TS ISO documents include consideration of work ratings for filters which is not used by AS/NZS 1715 or 1716. SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1 provides expanded information on Special Classes (eg Firefighting, welding, Escape and others).
2.4 RPE TRAINING	Clause 7.5	Clause 7	SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1 and 2 both give specified training elements to include. AS/NZS 1715 is more general in its requirements.
2.5 ISSUE OF RPE	Clause 7.7	Clause 6.10	More detail given in SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1
2.6 FITTING OF RPE	Clause 7.4	Clause 8.1	Specific and detailed fit testing information is provided in AS/NZS ISO 16975-3:2023
2.7 WEARING OF RPE	Clause 7.6, Annex D	Clause 8.1 - 8.4	More detail given in SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1
2.8 MAINTENANCE	Clause 7.7, Annex F	Clause 9	More detail given in SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1
2.9 RECORD KEEPING	Clause 7.10	Clause 10	
2.10 PROGRAM EVALUATION	Clause 7.9, Annex G	Clause 9	More detail given in SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1
SECTION 3 ENTRY OF CONTAMINANTS INTO THE BODY			
3.1 GENERAL	N/A	N/A	No direct equivalent in SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1 and -2.
3.2 INHALATION OF AIRBORNE CONTAMINANTS	Risk Assessment Clause 7.1	Risk Assessment Clause 4.2	
3.3 SKIN AND EYE ABSORPTION	Annex D.5.2.2	N/A	No direct equivalent in SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-2.
3.4 INGESTION	Clause 3.4	N/A	No direct equivalent in SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-2.

3.5 HEALTH EFFECTS OF AIRBORNE CONTAMINANTS	Annex C.1.3.2, 1.3.3	N/A	No direct equivalent in SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-2.
3.6 PARTICLES			No direct equivalent in SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1 and -2.
3.7 OXYGEN DEFICIENCY	Clause 7.3.1.1.1, 7.3.2.1, Annex A 3.3	Clause 5.4, Annex A Step 3	
SECTION 4 SELECTION OF RPE			
4.1 FACTORS IN SELECTION	Clause 7.1 & 7.2	Clause 6.6 - 6.10	SA/SNZTS ISO 16975-1 gives expansive information and selection flow charts to assist the selection process as well as expanded information on Special Classes (eg Firefighting, welding, Escape and others). Both SA/SNZ TS ISO documents include consideration of work ratings for filters which is not used by AS/NZS 1715 or 1716. SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1 provides expanded information on Special Classes (eg Firefighting, welding, Escape and others).
4.2 SELECTION FACTORS—CONTAMINANT-RELATED	Clause 7.3.1 -7.3.3	Clause 6.4, Annex A	More detail given in SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1
4.3 SELECTION FACTORS—TASK-RELATED	Clause 7.3.3.3	Clause 6.9 Step 8	More detail given in SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1
4.4 SELECTION FACTORS—OPERATOR-RELATED	Clause 7.3.3.2	Clause 6.10 Step 9	Both SA/SNZ TS ISO documents include consideration of work ratings for filters - which is not used by AS/NZS 1715 or 1716.
4.5 SELECTION FACTORS—EQUIPMENT LIMITATIONS	Clause 7.3.3.4 - 7.3.3.12	Clause 6.11 Step 10	
4.6 SELECTION OF RPE FOR SPECIAL RESPONSE HAZMAT INCIDENTS BY EMERGENCY SERVICE PERSONNEL	Clause 7.3.3.12	N/A	
SECTION 5 TYPES OF RPE AND THEIR LIMITATIONS			

5.1 GENERAL	Annex A.3	N/A	SA/SNZ TS ISO TS 16975-1 provides a section of information on the types of respiratory interface as well as the limitations. This information is mostly missing from SA/SNZ ISO 16975-2.
5.2 AIR-PURIFYING RPE	Annex A.3.3	N/A	
5.3 SUPPLIED-AIR RPE	Annex A.3.4	N/A	
5.4 OTHER DEVICES	Annex A.3.5	N/A	
SECTION 6 MEDICAL AND PHYSICAL CONSIDERATIONS			
6.1 MEDICAL ASSESSMENT	Clause 6.3.4, 7.3.3.2, Annex D.2.1.1	Clause 6.10 Step 9	Similar broad requirements to perform adequate medical assessment of all RPD wearers.
6.2 SPECIFIC FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE	Annex D.2.1, 2.2 & 2.3	Clause 6.10 Step 9	
SECTION 7 TRAINING			
7.1 GENERAL	Clause 7.5	Clause 7	All documents give a list of required elements to be addressed by training program.
7.2 FORMAT	N/A	N/A	
7.3 INSTRUCTIONS TO TRAINEES	N/A	N/A	
7.4 EMPLOYEE TRAINING PROGRAM GUIDE	Clause 7.5.2.1	N/A	
SECTION 8 TYPICAL RPE FIT TESTS AND CHECKS			
8.1 GENERAL	Clause 7.4	Clause 6.10 Step 9, 6.11 Step 10	See AS/NZS ISO 16975-3:2023 for comprehensive fit test information – methods, considerations and fit factors.
8.2 FREQUENCY OF FIT TESTS	Clause 7.4.1	See AS/NZS ISO 16975-3:2023	
8.3 FACIAL HAIR IN RPE FITTING	Clause 7.4.1		
8.4 EYE CORRECTION IN FITTING	See AS/NZS ISO 16975-3:2023		
8.5 FIT TEST METHODS	Clause 7.4.1		
8.6 FACTORS THAT AFFECT FACIAL FIT	See AS/NZS ISO 16975-3:2023		

SECTION 9 MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS			
9.1 GENERAL	Clause 7.7, Annex F	Clause 9	
9.2 CLEANING AND DISINFECTION	Clause 7.7	N/A	
9.3 INSPECTION	Clause 7.7	Clause 8.1	
9.4 REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT OF COMPONENTS	Clause 7.7	N/A	
9.5 REPLACEMENT OF FILTERS	Clause 7.3.3.7, Annex A2.3.2 -3, Annex B.2 - B.4	Clause 8.3	
9.6 STORAGE OF EQUIPMENT	Clause 7.8	N/A	
APPENDICES			
A - REQUIREMENTS FOR AIR QUALITY (COMPRESSORS OR CYLINDERS) FOR SUPPLIED-AIR RESPIRATORS	Clause 7.6.4	N/A	SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-1 in general, contains more detail and specific information than SA/SNZ TS ISO 16975-2 on all subjects.
B - FACIAL SEAL OF RESPIRATORS	Annex D2.2, 2.3.1, 2.5	Clause 6.10 Step 9, 6.11 Step 10	
C - PROCEDURES FOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTING RPE	Annex D3.4, Annex F3	N/A	
D - CHECKPOINTS FOR RESPIRATORY PROTECTION PROGRAM — ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATION	Clause 7.9, Annex G	Clause 9c	
E - RESPIRATOR SELECTION EXAMPLES	Annex J	Annex A	
F - SOURCES OF AIR FOR AIR-LINE RPE	Annex E	N/A	