



BELMONT HIGH SCHOOL | CASE STUDY

Staggered Height Safety Compliance for Schools - Tennis Balls and Tight Budgets

Strange things rain down on school roofs. These often require staff and students to make “rescue operations” that are far more dangerous than they seem. A misstep or a slippery surface can have tragic and expensive consequences - which is why many schools across Victoria are taking the necessary height safety measures to protect their people.

But while there is an ever-present need to meet safety standards for the protection of staff, students and visitors, time and budgets are limiting factors. Schools only close down for very short periods - many have activities on weekends and during holidays, resulting in there being small windows of opportunity in which to undertake repairs, modifications and installations.

Workplace Defender’s recent work at a High School in Geelong is a prime example of how schools can improve their roof access while providing a flexible, affordable and progressive rollout of services.

Budget Friendly, Staged Rollout

Our approach consisted of several stages to help Belmont reach compliance.

First, Workplace Defender analysed the existing systems in place across the multiple school buildings and why they were no longer adequate or able to meet safety standards. As expected, we found unsafe ladders, unprotected edges and a curved roof that required a bespoke solution. Interestingly, we also discovered single anchor points - an impractical and time-inefficient solution for roof access - no one is going to harness up to retrieve a stray lunch box!

Second, we worked with the school's leadership team on prioritisation to establish which areas would need access first. This involved identifying the high-risk / high-need areas in the school that demanded the most attention - gutters vs HVAC units vs tennis ball hot spots.

Finally and most importantly, in presenting our refined drawings, we worked in a staged rollout so that the solutions could be implemented across multiple financial year budgets. This staggered approach included working around strict timing schedules (like the Year 12 exams).

For schools and other budget-conscious organisations, Workplace Defender appreciates that not every piece of equipment needs to be installed immediately and is still able to take organisations towards full compliance within an appropriate time frame.

Scope Changes - Flexibility with No Surprises

As Workplace Defender was installing the equipment, the school leadership raised an aesthetic concern - the guardrails dramatically changed the visual appeal of the front building. Without missing a beat, Workplace Defender solved this issue by installing a fold-out system that permitted access to the roof as well as being aesthetically pleasing.

Despite the change of plan midway through the installation process, Workplace Defender was able to keep within the school's aggressive budget and timeline. This is largely due to 2 key differentiating factors that set us apart from our competition:

- 1) our initial measures and drawings are detailed and refined;
- 2) we manufacture and pre-fabricate all our equipment in-house.

These combined factors uniquely allow Workplace Defender to offer quick, flexible and affordable height safety solutions for the most demanding customers.

Towards Compliance for Everyone

This Geelong-based High School was able to gradually install all the required equipment and achieve full height-safety compliance throughout 12 months spanning two financial years. Thankfully, the footy balls, HVAC units and stray lunch boxes can now all be easily accessed with little chance of injury, keeping the students, staff and visitors safe and happy.

Workplace Defender is proud to be able to protect Australia's most important assets.

