



## **Building Advisory A19-005**

November 2015 (Revised June 2022)

### **Subject:**

Egress Window Guidelines

### **Advisory:**

### **Relevant Code Article:**

Division B, 9.9.10.1. Egress Windows or Doors for Bedrooms

1. Except where the *suite* is *sprinklered*, each bedroom or combination bedroom shall have at least one outside window or exterior door openable from the inside without the use of keys, tools or special knowledge and without the removal of sashes or hardware (see Article 9.5.1.2. and Appendix A)
2. The window referred to in Sentence (1)
  - a. shall provide an unobstructed opening of not less than 0.35 m<sup>2</sup> in area with no dimension less than 380 mm, and
  - b. maintain the required opening during an emergency without the need for additional support (see Appendix A)
3. Where a window required in Sentence (1) opens into a window well, a clearance of not less than 760mm shall be provided in front of the window (see Appendix A).
4. Where the sash of a window referred to in Sentence (3) swings towards the window well, the operation of the sash shall not reduce the clearance in a manner that would restrict escape in an emergency.
5. Where a protective enclosure is installed over the window well referred to in Sentence (3), the enclosure shall be openable from the inside without the use of keys, tools or special knowledge of the opening mechanism.
6. If the window referred to in Sentence (1) is provided with security bars, the security bars shall be openable from the inside without the use of keys, tools or special knowledge.

### **Window Operation and Definition**

**Picture:** Non operable, Not acceptable as an egress window.

**Casement:** swing operation hinged on a vertical axis. Acceptable as an egress window, provided the window may open a full 90 degrees swing free of obstructions.

**Horizontal Slider:** one fixed unit and one operable unit or dual operating units. Slides open horizontally. Acceptable as an egress window.

**Vertical Slider:** slides open vertically, remains in open position by friction. Acceptable as egress window.

**Awning:** swing operation top or head hinged on a horizontal axis, may be in swing or out swing. Acceptable as an egress window, provided the window may open a full 90 degree swing free of obstructions. Window must be able to remain in fully open position by its own mechanism. Operating hardware must not create an obstruction to egress (recommend side mounting). Out swing awning windows are not permitted for egress where it opens into a window well, unless there is a space of at least 760mm between the inside face of the window well and the sash of the fully opened window.

**Hopper:** swing operation bottom or sill hinged on a horizontal axis. Not acceptable as egress as it is required to crawl over the glass in an emergency.

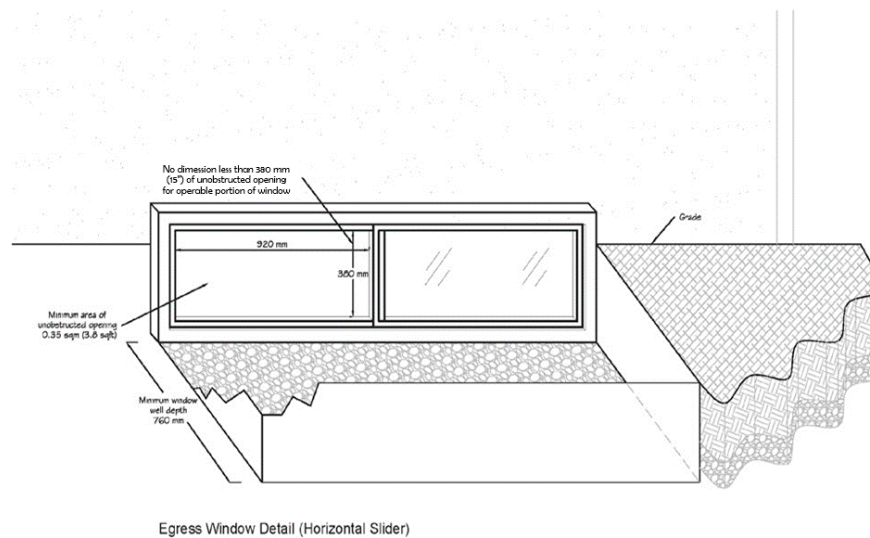
**Tilt and Turn:** dual swing operation may be in swing or out swing, must meet the requirements for a casement or awning without the need for special knowledge. Acceptable as egress window

## **Guidelines and Interpretations**

1. The term special knowledge is interpreted as knowledge of a movement or series of movements that would not be congruent with one simple motion to unlock the window and one simple motion to open it.
2. Unobstructed area is determined within the window's normal open position and does not allow for the removal of any parts or units.
3. Security bars on egress windows are not permitted unless reviewed and approved on a case by case basis.
4. Covers or grates over a window well serving a bedroom are not permitted unless reviewed and approved on a case by case basis.
5. Egress windows below cantilevers shall have a minimum clearance of 760mm between the underside of the projection and the top of the window well or adjacent grade. The cantilever should not project more than 610mm from the principal wall.
6. Egress windows below decks are not permitted unless there is a minimum headroom clearance of 760mm between grade and the underside of deck and the window opening is immediately adjacent to the edge of the deck above.

## Procedure

Proposed window egress is reviewed at the plans review stage and is verified at inspection that the installed window is consistent with what is specified on the approved drawings. Where a permit condition reading, "Division B, 9.7.1.2 – A minimum of one window in a bedroom shall provide a minimum unobstructed opening of 0.35m<sup>2</sup> (3.77ft<sup>2</sup>) with no dimension less than 380mm (15")" is added to the permit, the egress opening shall be verified by the inspector on site.



Chief Building Official  
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Planning and Development

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