

## Patterned Carpets

When manufacturing patterned carpets, it is necessary to use a series of processes, which unavoidably subjects the carpet to a variety of stresses. These processes include tufting or weaving, printing and finishing.

The stresses are applied in both length and width directions. Technology limitations mean that in many cases they will be unevenly applied from place to place through the carpet and so ultimately the pattern may not exactly match at edges or may exhibit some degree of bow, skew or run-out in the finished carpet.

A sculptured or cut and loop pile style carpet with a colour pattern has two pattern features introduced at separate stages of the production process. Therefore, it is quite likely that the two patterns cannot be synchronized. Retailer/contractors and consumers must take a conscious decision to “match” the dominant feature.

In addition, atmospheric conditions during storage and installation, and installation methods, can contribute to a lack of pattern match. For instance, direct stick methods give the installer far less opportunity to adjust the pattern match than do carpet gripper installations. A competent carpet layer will be able to obtain a reasonable pattern match by the use of good laying techniques, and installing the rolls in sequence.

Although there is no Australian standard covering the measurement of pattern match, all reputable carpet retailers will draw the consumer’s attention to the potential for a degree of pattern mismatch to occur. This will be by an appropriate statement on manufacturers’ labels and in technical literature.

Manufacturers will always endeavour to produce carpet with the best pattern match possible. However, it is recognized in the industry that retailers and contractors have an obligation to draw this aspect to the consumer’s attention at the time of purchase. Further, installers are expected to use good workmanship and materials to ensure that they do not contribute to a pattern mismatch.

Any consumer complaints concerning pattern mismatch that cannot be satisfactorily resolved between all the parties involved may be directed to the Carpet Industry Arbitration Service

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