



# **WORKING AT HEIGHTS MANAGEMENT**

Core Operating Procedure

Business Management Systems (BMS) Group

Document No.: HEQ-PCE-00046

**POWERING FUTURES,  
CREATING LEGACIES.**

# DOCUMENT VERSION CONTROL

*Note: Most recent change to this document is highlighted in grey.*

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|            |                                                    |           |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>1.</b>  | <b>Purpose .....</b>                               | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>2.</b>  | <b>Scope .....</b>                                 | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>3.</b>  | <b>Introduction .....</b>                          | <b>5</b>  |
| 3.1.       | Personal responsibility .....                      | 5         |
| <b>4.</b>  | <b>Roles and responsibilities .....</b>            | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>5.</b>  | <b>Working at heights.....</b>                     | <b>7</b>  |
| 5.1.       | Design consideration.....                          | 7         |
| <b>6.</b>  | <b>Assessing and controlling risks .....</b>       | <b>8</b>  |
| 6.1.       | Identifying hazards .....                          | 8         |
| 6.2.       | Analysing risk .....                               | 8         |
| 6.3.       | Working at Heights Permit .....                    | 9         |
| <b>7.</b>  | <b>Emergency recovery procedure .....</b>          | <b>10</b> |
| <b>8.</b>  | <b>Preparing for work at height .....</b>          | <b>11</b> |
| 8.1.       | Procuring plant & equipment.....                   | 11        |
| 8.2.       | Creating exclusion zones .....                     | 11        |
| 8.3.       | Planning access .....                              | 12        |
| 8.4.       | Determining edge protection requirements .....     | 12        |
| <b>9.</b>  | <b>Falling objects.....</b>                        | <b>12</b> |
| 9.1.       | Controls to prevent objects falling .....          | 13        |
| 9.2.       | Controls to arrest falling objects.....            | 13        |
| 9.3.       | Drop zones .....                                   | 14        |
| <b>10.</b> | <b>Plant and equipment certification .....</b>     | <b>14</b> |
| 10.1.      | Elevated Work Platforms (EWPs) .....               | 14        |
| 10.2.      | Hoists .....                                       | 14        |
| 10.3.      | Workboxes .....                                    | 15        |
| <b>11.</b> | <b>Scaffolds.....</b>                              | <b>15</b> |
| <b>12.</b> | <b>Fall-protection systems and equipment .....</b> | <b>16</b> |
| 12.2.      | Ladders .....                                      | 18        |
| 12.3.      | Portable work platforms .....                      | 18        |
| 12.4.      | Elevated Work Platforms (EWPs) .....               | 18        |

|            |                                           |           |
|------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 12.5.      | Hoists .....                              | 19        |
| <b>13.</b> | <b>training and competency .....</b>      | <b>19</b> |
| <b>14.</b> | <b>Work environment .....</b>             | <b>20</b> |
| 14.1.      | Adverse weather .....                     | 20        |
| 14.2.      | Barricades .....                          | 20        |
| 14.3.      | Working near electrical conductors .....  | 20        |
| 14.4.      | Working on roofs .....                    | 20        |
| 14.5.      | Accessing mobile equipment .....          | 20        |
| 14.6.      | Mounting and dismounting truck beds ..... | 21        |
| 14.7.      | Holes and openings .....                  | 21        |
| 14.8.      | Belt conveyors .....                      | 21        |
| <b>15.</b> | <b>Monitor and review .....</b>           | <b>21</b> |
| 15.1.      | Systems monitoring .....                  | 21        |
| <b>16.</b> | <b>Definitions .....</b>                  | <b>21</b> |
| <b>17.</b> | <b>References .....</b>                   | <b>23</b> |

## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Core Operating Procedure (COP) is to provide guidance on how to manage health, safety and environmental risks arising from falls from one level to another (working at height), including information on control measures to eliminate or minimise associated risks with preventative action where possible.

## 2. SCOPE

This document encompasses all BMD Group subsidiaries including BMD Constructions, Empower, BMD Urban, JMac Constructions and Urbex. For ease of reference, the term BMD is used throughout this document to reference the 'Group'.

This COP applies all workplaces where there is a risk of a fall by a person from one level to another and is reasonably likely to cause injury. It covers the following topics:

- Falling from a surface:
  - In or on an elevated workplace
  - Near an open pit or trench
  - Near an opening.
- Falling through a surface:
  - Working on a structure that could fail
  - Falling through an opening, hole or sump.
- Falling objects:
  - Working under other work groups.
- Any other situation where there is a reasonable likelihood of injury due to gravitational energy.

## 3. INTRODUCTION

Fall hazards are found in many workplaces where work is carried out at height. Falls can also occur at ground level into holes (e.g. trenches, manholes, service pits or kerb works which has not been backfilled).

A person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) has specific obligations under WHS Regulations to manage the risk of a fall by a worker from one level to another, including requirements to:

- ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, any work involving the risk of a fall is carried out on the ground or on a solid construction
- provide safe means of access to and exit from the workplace, and,
- Minimise the risk of falls, so far as is reasonably practicable, by providing a fall prevention device, work positioning system or a fall arrest system.

### 3.1. Personal responsibility

Workers have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that they do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons. Workers must comply with any reasonable instruction and direction given by the PCBU.

## 4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

| Senior Management                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all relevant workers have access to working at height training and equipment (appropriately certified to the relevant standard) as required.</li> <li>• Ensure all workers working at height and rescue teams are provided with appropriate training, equipment and resources.</li> <li>• Ensure all working at height equipment is regularly inspected and maintained.</li> <li>• A duty to exercise due diligence to ensure BMD complies with the WHS Act and Regulations.</li> <li>• Take reasonable steps to ensure BMD has and uses appropriate resources and processes to eliminate or minimise working at height risks at the workplace.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Project Management/Supervisor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take reasonable steps to eliminate or minimise working at height risks at the workplace.</li> <li>• Ensure all working at height work has been identified, recorded and risk assessed using the JHA and WMS, and works are carried out in accordance with the <a href="#">Working at Heights minimum standard</a></li> <li>• Ensure JHAs are conducted and WMSs are developed for all working at height work and a working at heights permit is completed.</li> <li>• Ensure all relevant workers are trained in working at height.</li> <li>• Ensure all workers at height are always observed.</li> <li>• Ensure all relevant working at height workers have understood and signed off on all appropriate JHA/WMSs.</li> <li>• Ensure relevant signs, barriers and safety equipment are implemented for working at height.</li> <li>• Ensure all working at height equipment is regularly inspected and maintained.</li> <li>• Ensure working at height signage is displayed, with area barriers being erected and adequate to stop unauthorised entry into fall/drop zone and arrest falling objects.</li> <li>• Ensure all emergency procedures are tested to ensure effectiveness.</li> <li>• Ensure access to Emergency Services is available if required.</li> </ul> |
| HSE Representatives                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all working at height equipment is regularly inspected and maintained.</li> <li>• Ensure all emergency procedures are tested to ensure effectiveness.</li> <li>• Advise all parties on compliance with HSE Standards, Acts, Regulations, Codes of Practice, etc.</li> <li>• Assist with risk analysis when required.</li> <li>• Assist in systems and compliance monitoring of working at height</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Workers (Including Subcontractors)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand and sign off on any JHA/WMS relevant to working at height.</li> <li>• Ensure you have all the required PPE and other equipment for working at height.</li> <li>• Ensure you have a controller present when working at height.</li> <li>• Take reasonable care for your own health and safety and not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons.</li> <li>• Comply with any reasonable instruction and direction given by the PCBU with regard to working at height.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

#### Controller/Site Response Team

- Understand and sign off on any JHA/WMS relevant to working at height.
- Ensure you have all the required PPE and other equipment for rescuing a worker who is working at height.
- Be trained in the rescue of a fallen worker in a full body harness.
- Participate in emergency procedure testing to ensure effectiveness.
- Implement control measures in an emergency.

## 5. WORKING AT HEIGHTS<sup>1</sup>

As a minimum standard on sites, a risk assessment shall be conducted, and appropriate control measures put in place where there is a potential of injury due to fall from one level to another. Physical control measures “**must**” be in use when a person is:

- Working within two metres of an unprotected edge, and
- Have the potential to fall two metres or more.

On some sites, the Project Manager may identify other high-risk work areas considered to be ‘at height’.

Potential high-risk work areas include:

- Trenching or excavations
- Pits, shafts or manholes
- Structures or plant being constructed, installed, demolished, dismantled, inspected, tested, maintained, repaired or cleaned
- Fragile surfaces such as cement sheeting roofs, fibreglass sheeting roofs and skylights
- Potentially unstable surfaces such as stacks of building materials, timber pallets or bricks
- Inspection areas at height for plant and equipment outside of an encapsulated platform
- Access areas at height to plant or equipment under operational conditions (e.g. mast of piling rig or crane);
- Work over or on water
- Delivery trucks/trailers.

### 5.1. Design consideration

Designers must, wherever reasonably practicable, eliminate the need to work at height in accordance with Safe Work Australia's principles of safe design from:

- Structures
- Plant
- Equipment.

If this is not possible, the design should incorporate fall-prevention and protection control measures. These measures should consider:

- Risks to personnel during the construction stage
- Risks to personnel during the maintenance/operation stage.

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• <sup>1</sup> FSC Audit Criteria H 1.1 & 1.2

## 6. ASSESSING AND CONTROLLING RISKS

Each Project Manager must ensure a risk management process is undertaken to<sup>2</sup>:

- Identify areas where work at height will be performed
- Assess activities performed at height using the WMS and develop appropriate to the site and working at height activities, and
- Implement controls to allow these activities to be performed safely in accordance with the hierarchy of control.

During this process, the Project Manager must also:

- Determine emergency measures and responsibilities
- Define requirements for using the Work at Height Permit System, and
- Ensure that the staff undertaking the activity are trained to do so.

### 6.1. Identifying hazards

During the risk management process, the Project Manager must identify any situation where a worker could:

- Fall from a surface (consider the fall trajectory, swing risk and potential interaction with nearby structures)
- Fall through a surface
- Be hit by falling objects, or
- Suffer an injury caused by gravitational energy.

Particular attention is paid to areas where<sup>3</sup>:

- The work area is sloped, uneven or slippery
- Work involves activities that could cause a worker to lose their balance
- Trip hazards that could cause the worker to stumble and fall over the edge
- The potential for objects, as well as personnel, to fall
- Weather, or other environmental factors, influencing working conditions.

### 6.2. Analysing risk

Once fall hazards are identified, the Project Manager analyses the associated risks using either:

- A Risk Assessment, or
- Work Method Statement (WMS) and Job Hazard Analysis (JHA).

The choice depends on the type and location of the task.

#### 6.2.1. Work Method Statement (WMS)

For many routine tasks at height, a WMS and JHA is the only analysis required. The JHA can be attached to the Work at Height Permit.

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• <sup>2</sup> FSC Audit Criteria H 1.1  
• <sup>3</sup> FSC Audit Criteria H 1.2

### 6.2.2. Risk assessment

Risk assessments are required if the work task is not routine or if the risk is particularly high. Risk assessments must address<sup>4</sup>:

- The type of access required
- Selection of appropriate equipment
- Experience and ability of workers
- Type of work activity
- Work environment
- Type of plant used
- Temporary or permanent structures in place
- The condition of supporting structures (such as roofs, flooring etc.)
- Selection of anchor and tie-off points, and
- Fall Clearance.

**Notes:** *The risk assessment must be repeated any time the scope of work changes or the risk of fall increases. Workers performing the work at height must be involved in the risk assessment.*

### 6.2.3. Controlling risk

The Project Manager must use the standard hierarchy of controls<sup>5</sup> to negate any risks identified. In order of preference, these controls are:

| Level | Control Type            | Examples in Construction Context                                                          |
|-------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1     | Elimination             | Design work to be done at ground level or use prefabricated components lifted into place. |
| 2     | Substitution            | Replace high-risk methods with safer alternatives, e.g., using EWPs instead of ladders.   |
| 3     | Isolation               | Install barriers or guardrails to separate workers from fall hazards.                     |
| 4     | Engineering Controls    | Use scaffolds, edge protection, catch decks, or anchor points compliant with AS/NZS 5532. |
| 5     | Administrative Controls | Implement WMS, signage, permits, supervision, and training.                               |
| 6     | PPE                     | Harnesses, lanyards, helmets, and fall arrest systems.                                    |

### 6.3. Working at Heights Permit<sup>6</sup>

A [Working at Heights Permit](#) is required for any work involving a fall risk of 2m or more where:

- the edge cannot be controlled by a physical barrier, or
- a safety harness is the primary control.

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• <sup>4</sup> FSC Audit Criteria H 1.3  
 • <sup>5</sup> FSC Audit Criteria H 1.1  
 • <sup>6</sup> FSC Audit Criteria H 1.3

This permit is designed to:

- Ensure risks associated with the work has been identified and assessed
- Ensure controls are in place to negate the risks.

The permit is not intended to replace other risk assessment processes. Its purpose is to ensure these processes have been followed before the work begins. Permits cannot be issued unless the required controls are implemented and any unresolved items require escalation or redesign of controls.

Training and Competency requirements for the completion of permits is outlined in the [HSEQ Training and Competency Management](#) standard.

### 6.3.1. Defining permit requirements

As a default, the permit must be completed for:

- Safety harness being used as a primary control
- Where fall restraint / arrest systems are used
- Where horizontal lifeline system or industrial rope access systems are used
- Working where the risk of fall cannot be controlled by physical barrier

As a default, the permit does not need to be completed when:

- the risk of falling is eliminated using passive measures (e.g. handrails), or
- a safety harness is used as a secondary control or
- working from a secure platform (e.g. when operating an Elevated Working Platform) or
- the work is being carried out from a temporary structure (e.g. scaffolding)

### 6.3.2. Permit contents

This permit must contain:

- Reason for permit to work at height
- Details of work
- Plant and equipment
- Working at height requirements
- Post fall recovery plan
- Work method statement requirements

### 6.3.3. Permit duration

A permit is valid for the duration of the activity to a maximum of the length of the shift, but no more than seven (7) days, unless activity changes.

## 7. EMERGENCY RECOVERY PROCEDURE<sup>7</sup>

In developing emergency procedures, different types of emergency and rescue scenarios that might arise should be considered. These are generally identified in the initial risk assessment.

When establishing emergency procedures, take into account:

- Location of the work area
- Communications

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• <sup>7</sup> FSC Audit Criteria H 1.7

- Rescue equipment
- Capabilities of rescuers
- First aid requirements and resources
  - Local emergency services response.

**Note:** *A worker suspended in a full body harness must be rescued as soon as possible within 10-20 minutes after a fall to prevent suspension intolerance (trauma).*

To achieve this, each site must be adequately prepared before any work is performed at height. Preparations include:

- Forming and training a Site Response Team, and details recorded in the Project Training Needs Analysis.
- Performing thorough risk assessments for all work areas at height
- Procuring and maintaining suitable rescue equipment
- Having a person on site who can rescue the worker if they fall
- Regular testing of emergency procedures to ensure effectiveness.

**Note:** *Workers are not allowed to work alone at height.*

## 8. PREPARING FOR WORK AT HEIGHT

### 8.1. Procuring plant & equipment

Before procuring any plant or equipment to be used for work at height, consideration must be given to:

- Appropriateness
- Performance, and
- Legislative requirements.

Each item of equipment must have a label or marking clearly identifying it as meeting relevant and approved design and performance standards.

### 8.2. Creating exclusion zones<sup>8</sup>

#### 8.2.1. Zone dimensions

An exclusion zone must be established below, and directly adjacent to, any work at height. This zone must be cleared of all workers and mobile, portable and static equipment. The extent of the exclusion zone is determined by:

- The height of the work above the lower level, and
- The possibility that structures, pipes or equipment in the area can deflect falling objects.

Objects can be deflected into adjacent lower levels as well as to the ground.

#### 8.2.2. Zone markings

The exclusion zone must be surrounded by a striped tape barrier (or similar) and marked with warning signs.

The barrier must be approximately 1 metre above ground level and must be maintained and kept in place while the hazard is present.

- Signs must read “Caution–Overhead Work–Keep Clear” or similar
- Depending on the risk, overhead protective structures or cladding may be required

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• <sup>8</sup> FSC Audit Criteria H 1.2

- Sites wanting to use witches' hats must define requirements for their use.

### 8.3. Planning access

If people are required to work in areas where there is a risk of falling, the Project Manager must provide a WMS for them to access and egress those areas. Access methods include:

- Fixed work platforms
- Temporary work platforms
- Walkways
- Stairways
- Ladders
- Hoists.

#### 8.3.1. Selecting an access method

When selecting an access method, the following factors must be considered:

- Tools and equipment workers may need to carry; (mechanical lifting aids may be used to replace manual handling tasks)
- The frequency and number of people who may need to use the access which must be kept clear of obstructions
- Supervision and inspection requirements
- The location and space required for any plant, equipment or materials;
- Requirements for getting plant, equipment and materials to the work area
- Exposure of the access to weather
- Lighting (either natural or artificial).

#### 8.3.2. Stairways

Stairways must have landings at all points of access and must have intermediate landings as required. The length and width of the landings must be at least the width of the stairway.

Guardrails must be provided on the open side of all stairs. Handrails must be provided on one side of all closed stairs (e.g. Fire Escapes).

Stairways wider than one metre must have hand or guardrails on each side and regularly inspected for potential hazards.

### 8.4. Determining edge protection requirements

Edge protection must be used in any work areas where workers are not using fall-protection equipment and have the potential to fall more than two (2) metres.

## 9. FALLING OBJECTS

All sites must have systems in place to prevent injury from objects falling from heights<sup>9</sup>. If any risk exists, a WMS must be adopted.

Objects that may fall from height include:

- Hand-held equipment such as drills, saws and tools

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• <sup>9</sup> FSC Audit Criteria H 1.2

- Materials such as nails, pieces of wood and debris (e.g. steel off cuts).

The following measures can be used to control risks associated with falling objects:

- A safe means of raising and lowering plant, materials and debris
- Implementing an exclusion zone beneath the works occurring at height
- Measures to prevent objects falling
- Measures to arrest falling objects
- Appropriate PPE (as a last resort).

Additional controls are needed in any situation where the public may be exposed to the risk of falling objects.

## 9.1. Controls to prevent objects falling

As well as establishing exclusion zones, physical controls must be in place to prevent tools and materials falling from heights. Numerous methods can be used to prevent objects from falling from height as detailed in this section.

### 9.1.1. Solid barriers

Solid barriers such as toe boards, infill panels and brick-guards can be used to stop objects from rolling or being kicked off the edge of platforms.

Polythene sheets can be used between boards on work platforms to stop small items such as nails and bolts from falling.

### 9.1.2. Containment and Catch Systems

Covered chutes can be used to remove debris from the work area.

Safety nets, catch platforms, containment screens and material drop shoots can be implemented

### 9.1.3. Tool lanyards

Hand tools being used at height should have a secondary securing mechanism, such as a lanyard, which is attached either to the workman or to a fixed point adjacent to the work site.

Tools must be carried aloft and returned to ground level using a proper tool belt or other effective means to stop them from falling.

### 9.1.4. Housekeeping

Work platforms kept clear of loose materials are much less likely to present a risk from falling objects. All loose and redundant tools and equipment should be removed once work tasks are completed.

## 9.2. Controls to arrest falling objects

If the controls used to prevent objects from falling are not adequate, further controls must be identified and implemented to prevent injury from objects that have already fallen.

These usually consist of screens or overhead protective structures that catch falling objects.

If a scaffold is erected in a public place, nets, fans and covered walkways may be required to provide extra protection for pedestrians.

### 9.3. Drop zones

If the control measures implemented do not eliminate the risk of a falling object causing injury, areas where objects may fall must be designated as drop zones.

Drop zones must be barricaded, access must be restricted, and signs displayed whenever there is a risk of falling objects.

If the overhead work is suspended for any period (excluding crib breaks), drop zone barriers must be removed. They must be re-applied when work resumes.

If the overhead work is extended, or moves outside the drop zone, the drop zone must be re-assessed and re-applied before work begins.

## 10. PLANT AND EQUIPMENT CERTIFICATION<sup>10</sup>

### 10.1. Elevated Work Platforms (EWPs)

All EWPs used on site must meet or exceed certain minimum specifications and documentation requirements.

#### 10.1.1. Inspections and maintenance

As a minimum, all EWPs must undergo the following inspections and maintenance:

- Daily pre-operational (pre-start) inspections
- Routine inspections and maintenance, at intervals not exceeding 3 months
- Annual inspections and maintenance, and
- Major inspections and maintenance after 10 years of service and then every 5 years thereafter.

#### 10.1.2. Fibreglass components

All fibreglass components must be regularly inspected, tested and maintained.

#### 10.1.3. Records

Logbooks must be current and kept with the vehicle. Inspection and testing reports and certificates must be kept in the site office.

#### 10.1.4. Other plant used at work platforms

Certain minimum requirements must be met by:

- Work platforms
- Any plant used to lift work platforms.

### 10.2. Hoists

All hoists used on site must meet or exceed certain minimum specifications and documentation requirements.

#### 10.2.1. Inspection and maintenance

As a minimum, all hoists must undergo the following inspections and maintenance:

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• <sup>10</sup> FSC Audit Criteria H 1.3

- Daily pre-operational (pre-start) inspections
- Routine inspections and maintenance, at intervals not exceeding 1 month
- Annual inspections and maintenance
- Major inspections and maintenance after 10 years of service and then every 5 years thereafter.

### 10.2.2. Records

Logbooks must be current and kept with the unit. Inspection and testing reports and certificates must be kept in the site office.

### 10.3. Workboxes

If workboxes are used to perform work at height:

- The lifting crane must meet specified standards
- The workbox must meet specified standards
- Workers in the workbox must follow specified safety requirements
- A [Crane Workbox Permit](#) must be completed.

## 11. SCAFFOLDS

All scaffolds used on site must meet or exceed certain minimum specifications and documentation requirements<sup>11</sup> as per [Scaffold Management](#) Core Operating Procedure.

All scaffolding must be selected to meet the specific needs of the work task. This dictates the:

- Type and strength of scaffolding chosen;
- Configuration of the scaffolding

### 11.1.1. Planning

Scaffolds must be designed by a qualified designer and must have their design certified.

### 11.1.2. Erection and dismantling

With the exception of light-weight mobile scaffolds and basic modular steel scaffolds up to 4 metres high, all scaffolds must be erected and certified by appropriately qualified scaffolders. A scaff-tag system must be used during erection, use of and dismantling of scaffolds.

### 11.1.3. Inspection and maintenance

The supervising scaffolder must perform a handover inspection whenever a scaffold is:

- Erected
- Relocated
- Altered
- Extended, or
- Damaged.

Scaffolds must be checked on daily basis and regular formal inspections conducted. The inspection interval depends on:

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• <sup>11</sup> FSC Audit Criteria H 1.6

- The type of scaffold
- Work-area conditions and
- The type of work being performed.

## 12. FALL-PROTECTION SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT<sup>12</sup>

There are two categories of fall-protection systems:

- Fall-restraint systems, designed to prevent workers at height from falling
- Fall-arrest systems designed to halt the fall of a worker who has fallen.

All fall protection equipment used on site must meet or exceed certain minimum specifications and legislative requirements.

### 12.1.1. Inspection and maintenance

The requirements for the inspection of personal and common use fall protection equipment are below.

| Inspection Requirement                                                                                              | Piece of Equipment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Inspection by operator before and after each use                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal equipment including harnesses, lanyard assemblies, connectors, fall-arrest devices</li> <li>• Common use equipment including as ropes, slings and mobile attachment devices</li> </ul>                                                                                                         |
| 6-monthly inspection by rigger or PUAEQU001- Prepare, Maintain and Test response Equipment” as competent to inspect | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fall-arrest devices</li> <li>• Belts, harnesses, lanyard assemblies and associated personal equipment</li> <li>• Harnesses shall be inspected by a competent person at intervals not exceeding six (6) months, unless a shorter interval is specified by the manufacturer or risk assessment</li> </ul> |
| 12-monthly inspection/service by qualified engineer                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanently installed anchorages</li> <li>• Fall-arrest devices (full service including dismantling where indicated)</li> <li>• Horizontal lifelines and rails, including integral components and permanently installed mobile attachment devices</li> </ul>                                            |
| Inspection on entry or re-entry into service                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All personal and common use equipment</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Inspection after a fall-arrest (and before further use)                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All items which have been stressed as a result of a fall</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

**Note:** Where the notation of “\*” has been used, the inspection or servicing intervals shall be more frequent if recommended by the manufacturer or supplier.

<sup>12</sup> FSC Audit Criteria 1.4

The RGBY colour code tagging system is to be used to demonstrate that the equipment was checked and was fit for service when last inspected. Inspection tags remain current for 3 months.

Inspections may commence checks two weeks prior and continue up to 2 weeks after the end of the month of expiry, with the tagged equipment deemed as compliant for that period.

All equipment must be correctly stored and maintained.

### 12.1.2. Static lines

Only qualified riggers and scaffolders are allowed to install or remove static line systems. All static line systems must meet specific requirements.

### 12.1.3. Using fall protection equipment

Workers must be trained in the use of fall protection equipment and details recorded in the [Training Needs Analysis](#).

### 12.1.4. Fall protection equipment records

Each item of fall protection equipment must be recorded in the [Working at Heights Equipment Register](#). Details of all inspections must be recorded on this register. Subcontractors must have available working at heights equipment register should the equipment be in use.

### 12.1.5. Anchorages

Each anchorage point should comply with the requirements in AS/NZS 1891:4 Industrial fall-arrest systems and devices – selection, use and maintenance<sup>13</sup>. All anchorages must meet minimum strength requirements and must be correctly labelled. Single-person anchor point strength requirements should meet a minimum of 15kN as per AS/NZS 1891:4.

All anchorages should be tested and approved by a qualified engineer person before use. A visual inspection may not reveal the structural integrity of the anchor point (i.e. the bolt may have failed below the concrete surface).

Each component of the system and its attachment to an anchorage must be inspected by a qualified engineer:

- after it is installed but before it is used
- at regular intervals, and
- Immediately after it has been used to arrest a fall.

| TAG COLOUR | INSPECTION PERIOD   | Sample: QAL Tag                                                                       |
|------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Red        | January to March    |  |
| Green      | April to June       |                                                                                       |
| Blue       | July to September   |                                                                                       |
| Yellow     | October to December |                                                                                       |

<sup>13</sup> FSC Audit Criteria H 1.4

### 12.1.6. Helmets and chinstraps

Some sites may require personnel working at height to wear helmets with suitable chinstraps.

## 12.2. Ladders<sup>14</sup>

All ladders used on site must meet or exceed certain minimum requirements. Ladders should have a load rating of at least 140 kg and be manufactured for industrial use.

Platform ladders must only be used for low-risk, short-duration tasks and not as a work platform when no other reasonably practicable alternative exists, and specific guidelines are documented and strictly followed. All ladders and platform ladders must be **fit for purpose**, correctly rated, and **set up in accordance with manufacturer instructions and site conditions**.

All other ladders, including step ladders, must only be used for access and egress

Specific controls and use must be documented in a JHA card or WMS.

### 12.2.1. Access or egress

Where fixed or extension ladders are used for access or egress, ensure<sup>15</sup>:

- There is a firm and level work platform, free from obstructions to step onto from the ladder;
- The ladder extends at least 1 metre above the stepping-off point on the working platform; and
- Edge protection is provided at the stepping off point where people access the working platform.
- The use of fixed ladders must be undertaken in accordance with AS 1657:2018 which outlines design, construction and installation of fixed platforms, walkways, stairways and ladders.
- The ladder is on a 4:1 ratio (4m vertical, 1m out).

### 12.2.2. Maintenance

The Project Manager must ensure a [Ladder Inspection Register](#) is established and an inspection program is in place. Intervals between inspections must never exceed 3 months. Subcontractors utilising ladders will be required to make available the ladder register.

## 12.3. Portable work platforms

Work platforms must be properly designed for the task and the loads they are likely to carry. An engineer must approve the design.

All portable work platforms must meet or exceed certain minimum standards.

## 12.4. Elevated Work Platforms (EWPs)

EWPs must be chosen to meet the specific requirements of the project.

Unless otherwise designed, EWPs should only be used as work platforms and not as a means of entering and exiting a work area unless in accordance with AS2550.10 Cranes, hoists and winches – Safe use - Mobile elevating work platforms.

Except in emergencies, they must only be used to access and egress work areas if:

- 
- <sup>14</sup> FSC Audit Criteria H 1.5
  - <sup>15</sup> FSC Audit Criteria H 1.6

- There is no practicable, safe alternative, or
- A safe system of work has been developed and approved by a Project Manager on site.

## 12.5. Hoists

Hoists must be selected and sited according to the specific requirements of the project.

A Hoist Inspection and Testing Certificate must be completed each time a hoist is erected.

### 12.5.1. Post installation tests

The following tests must be performed after a hoist is installed:

- Safe Working Load (SWL) test
- Drop test, and
- Hoist over-speed test.

### 12.5.2. Pre-start operational inspection

The following tests must be performed before each shift of operational use:

- Function test
- Brake test.

### 12.5.3. Operator requirements

Hoist operators must be:

- Certified
- Fit for work
- Authorised.

### 12.5.4. Hoist operation

Workers must access hoists at designated landings and follow specified guidelines of use.

## 13. TRAINING AND COMPETENCY

All working at heights training should be identified and conducted in accordance with the BMD [HSEQ Training and Competency Management](#) standard. For BMD projects, the project specific training needs analysis (TNA) should identify the training and competency requirements applicable. A summary of the key requirements is outlined below:

| Activity                                                            | Required Competency                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Working at heights<br>Eg scissor, attach to anchor point, davit arm | Where the activity requires work to be performed under a Working at Heights Permit, the worker must hold the <b>Work Safely at Heights</b> unit (CPCCCM2012 or RIIWHS204E) |
| EWP greater than 11m                                                | Must hold a valid High-risk licence                                                                                                                                        |
| Scaffold                                                            | Must hold a valid High-risk licence                                                                                                                                        |
| Man box                                                             | Where the activity requires you to wear a fall restraint/arrest system, the worker must hold the <b>Work Safely at Heights</b> unit (CPCCCM2012 or RIIWHS204E)             |

| Activity                 | Required Competency                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| IRATA Rope Access ticket | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Level 1:</b> Basic rope manoeuvres, equipment care, and descent rescues under supervision</li> <li><b>Level 2:</b> Advanced rope tasks and rescue techniques</li> <li><b>Level 3:</b> Supervisory role with full responsibility for rigging systems, rescue plans, and compliance with legislation and safety procedures</li> </ul> |
| Rescue                   | Must be trained in the safe use and maintenance of the rescue equipment in use for the task being undertaken.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

## 14. WORK ENVIRONMENT

Ensure all additional environmental hazards have been identified<sup>16</sup>.

### 14.1. Adverse weather

All work at height must be postponed in severe weather unless:

- It is an emergency situation, or
- Specific approval has been given by a Project Manager on site.

### 14.2. Barricades

Barricades must be erected and maintained wherever there is risk of:

- A person falling, or
- A person being struck by falling objects.

### 14.3. Working near electrical conductors

If minimum safe approach distances from electrical conductors cannot be maintained:

- The relevant electricity power supply authority must be contacted;
- A written risk assessment and a safe system of work must be developed; and
- Safety observers must be used to warn workers that they are approaching overhead power lines.

Refer to [Working Near Services Management](#) Core Operating Procedure.

### 14.4. Working on roofs

Protection must be provided for all workers who are working on roofs and are at risk of falling.

### 14.5. Accessing mobile equipment

Steps must be taken to reduce the risk of fall injuries to:

- Operators accessing mobile equipment, and
- Maintenance workers accessing mobile equipment.

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<sup>16</sup> FSC Audit Criteria H 1.1

## 14.6. Mounting and dismounting truck beds

Workers must not access truck trailers and trays unless there are specific systems of work in place to prevent falling (refer to [Plant and Equipment Management](#) Core Operating Procedure).

## 14.7. Holes and openings

All holes and openings that workers could fall through must be adequately protected against falls into the open penetration. This protection must be secured to prevent any accidental movement of such protection.

### 14.7.1. Excavation edge protection

Any part of a trench or excavation where a person could fall from one level to another level must be delineated as soon as possible after excavation and as identified in the JHA and recorded in the WMS.

Delineation must be located at least 1 metre from the zone of influence. Materials must not be stacked in the space between the barrier and the trench edge. For more detail refer to the [Trenching and Excavation Management](#) COP.

## 14.8. Belt conveyors

The following control measures must be used to prevent falls from conveyors:

- Adequate and properly maintained walkways and working platforms must be provided along the length of the conveyor, and
- The open side of walkways and platforms must have suitable hand-rails lower rails and toe boards.

## 15. MONITOR AND REVIEW

### 15.1. Systems monitoring

Workplace Inspections and monitoring will be undertaken in accordance with the Workplace Inspection and Observation (Monitoring) Management Standard.

Specific working at heights inspections should be undertaken using the Beakon Scaffolding and Working at heights inspection template.

## 16. DEFINITIONS

|                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Workers</b>                | Workers, contractors, subcontractors, labour hire workers.                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>PCBU</b>                   | Persons conducting a business or undertaking.                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Engineer</b>               | In relation to the performance of a task, means a person who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is a registered professional engineer under the Professional Engineers Act 2002, and,</li><li>• Is competent to perform the task</li></ul> |
| <b>Fall</b>                   | A fall by a person from one level to another that is reasonably likely to cause injury to the person or any other person.                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Fall Prevention System</b> | A safety mechanism designed to minimize or eliminate the risk of falls, especially in situations involving working at heights.                                                                                                                   |

|                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Fall Arrest System</b>              | Is intended to safely stop a worker falling an uncontrolled distance and reduce the impact of the fall.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Fall Protection Device</b>          | Any equipment that is designed to prevent a fall for temporary work at heights, and once in place does not require any further adjustment by workers using the device.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Temporary Work Platform</b>         | Work platforms, other than permanently installed fixed platforms, used to provide a working area for the duration of the job and designed to prevent workers from falling. Temporary work platforms include scaffolds, elevated work platforms and work boxes, portable and fabricated platforms or any other platform that provides a working area and is designed to prevent a fall.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Working at Height</b>               | Wherever it is possible for a person performing work to fall.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Risk of Fall</b>                    | <p>A circumstance exposing a worker while at work, or other person while at or in the vicinity of a workplace, to a risk of a fall that is reasonably likely to cause injury to the worker or other person. This includes circumstances in which the worker or other person is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in or on plant or a structure at an elevated level</li> <li>• in or on plant being used to gain access to an elevated level</li> <li>• in the vicinity of an opening through which a person could fall</li> <li>• in the vicinity of an edge over which a person could fall</li> <li>• on or in the vicinity of a surface through which a person could fall, or</li> <li>• on or near the vicinity of a slippery, sloping or unstable surface.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Risk Control</b>                    | Taking action to eliminate health and safety risks, so far as is reasonably practicable and if it is not possible, to minimise the risks so far as is reasonably practicable. Eliminating a hazard also eliminates any risks associated with that hazard.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Suspension Intolerance</b>          | Suspension intolerance (trauma) can occur with a fall arrest system when a person has an arrested fall and is suspended in an upright, vertical position with the harness straps causing pressure on the leg veins. The lower legs' capacity to store large amounts of blood reduces the return of blood to the heart, slowing the heart rate which can cause the person to faint. This may lead to renal failure and eventually death, depending on a person's susceptibility. This condition may be worsened by heat and dehydration.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Controller / Site Response Team</b> | A competent person/team with skills and experience to rescue workers who have fallen from height or are suspended in a full body harness.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>JHA</b>                             | Job Hazard Analysis – potential incident and hazard identification and risk analysis assessment of high-risk construction work.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>PFPE</b>                            | Personnel Fall Prevention Equipment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>WMS</b>                             | Work Method Statement – incorporating the elements identified in the JSA and providing a safe work method for conducting the identified task at hand.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>EWP</b>                             | Elevated Work Platform.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>PPE</b>                             | Personal Protective Equipment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

## 17. REFERENCES

-  [National Standard for Construction Work \[NOHSC: 1016 \(2005\)\]](#)
-  [AS/NZS ISO 45001:2018 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems](#)
-  [AS/NZS 1891.4:2021 Industrial fall-arrest systems and devices - Selection, use and maintenance](#)
-  [AS/NZS 1892.1:2018 Portable ladders - Performance and geometric requirements](#)
-  [AS/NZS 1892.2:1992 Portable ladders - Timber](#)
-  [AS/NZS 1892.5:2020 Portable ladders - Selection, safe use and care](#)
-  [AS 1657:2018 Fixed platforms, walkways, stairways and ladders - Design, construction and installation](#)
-  [AS 4687.1:2022 Temporary fencing and hoardings](#)
-  [AS 4576:2020 Guidelines for scaffolding](#)
-  [AS/NZS 1576.1:2019 Scaffolding - General requirements](#)
-  [AS/NZS 1891.1:2020 Personal equipment for work at height](#)
-  [AS/NZS 1891.2:2001 Industrial fall-arrest systems and devices - Horizontal lifeline and rail systems](#)
-  [AS/NZS 1891.3:2020 Personal equipment for work at height - Fall-arrest devices](#)
-  [AS/NZS 1891.4:2009 Industrial fall-arrest systems and devices - Selection, use and maintenance](#)
-  [AS 1418.1:2021 Cranes, hoists and winches - General requirements](#)
-  [AS/NZS 1418.10:2011 Cranes, hoists and winches - Mobile elevated work platforms](#)
-  [AS 2550.1:2011 Cranes, hoists and winches - Safe use - General requirements](#)
-  [AS 2550.10:2006 Cranes, hoists and winches - Safe use - Mobile elevating work platforms](#)
-  [AS/NZS 4994.1:2023 Temporary edge protection - General requirements](#)
-  [AS/NZS 4994.2:2023 Temporary edge protection - Roof edge protection - Installation and dismantling](#)
-  [AS/NZS 4994.3:2023 Temporary edge protection - Installation and dismantling for edges other than roof edges](#)
-  [Australian Government Building and Construction OHS Accreditation Scheme: OFSC Audit Criteria H1 Working at Heights](#)
-  [Model Code of Practice: Managing the risk of falls at workplaces](#)
-  [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)
-  [WorkSafe Qld](#)
-  [SafeWork NSW](#)
-  [WorkSafe Victoria](#)
-  [SafeWork SA](#)
-  [NT WorkSafe](#)
-  [WorkSafe WA](#)
-  [Safe Work Australia Website: Construction Industry Information](#)

### Associated Documents

-  [Ladder Inspection Register](#)
-  [Working at Heights Permit](#)
-  [Plant and Equipment Management](#)
-  [Project Training and Competency Register](#)
-  [Risk Management Standard](#)
-  [Trenching and Excavation Management](#)
-  [Training Needs Analysis](#)
-  [Scaffold Management](#)
-  [Working Near or Over Water Management](#)
-  [Working at Heights Equipment Register](#)
-  [Working at Heights Minimum Standards](#)

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