Catena
Inspection & Engineering Services Ltd
Lifting Solutions & Supplies
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CHS014

WORKING AT HEIGHT

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Links

The following documents are closely associated with this policy:

- Health and Safety Policy

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Version Control	Document Location If using a printed version of this document, ensure it is the latest published version. The latest version can be found on the company Intranet site.

Version	Date Approved	Publication Date	Approved by	Summary of Changes
1	15/05/20	15/05/20	MOM	Pg 6 Diagram inserted
				Pg 8-11 additional sections inserted

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INTRODUCTION

Catena Inspection & Lifting Engineering Services Ltd (here after known as CATENA) acknowledges the importance of having a policy in place to protect employees and other persons who may be involved in working at height

Falls from height are one of the main causes of death and major injury at work. The Work at Height Regulations 2005 aim to protect those working at height where there is a risk of a fall liable to cause injury. Where working at height cannot be avoided, a suitable and sufficient risk assessment must be undertaken. The work must be properly planned, appropriately supervised, and carried out in as safe a way as is reasonably practicable.

OBJECTIVES

This policy has been written to provide a reference document to ensure that work at height is carried out safely by CATENA employers, employees' contractors and visitors.

SCOPE

This policy will apply to all CATENA employees, contractors and visitors involved with working at height.

The Regulations do not specify any height limit; the legislation encourages a risk-based approach to work at any height where injury may result if suitable precautions are not taken. This policy applies to all work under the control of the CATENA, indoor and outside and covers a range of circumstances, e.g.

- design and construction of buildings and other structures
- using work equipment (a work platform, scaffolding, or a ladder)
- work on a roof
- work next to openings such as cellars or excavations
- use of inappropriate means (standing on a table or chair) to change a light bulb.

Working at height in an office, or similar low risk environment, such as accessing top shelves, can be addressed through the general risk assessment process, where an office risk assessment can be adapted for use.

Exceptions

Travelling up and down fixed stairs (though it does apply to working on stairs)

RESPONSIBILITIES

CATENA has a duty to manage all work at height which involves CATENA employees or is on the CATENA site.

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Must make arrangements to ensure:

- all work at height is avoided where possible
- all work at height is properly planned and organised, ensuring this is proportionate to the risks involved in the work
- the risks from work at height are assessed and the appropriate access equipment is selected and used
- those involved in work at height are suitably trained and competent for the task
- personal fall protection equipment provided for work at height is properly maintained and inspected before first use and then at least every six months or after circumstances which might jeopardise safety have occurred, of which records are kept. This includes checking that none has been in service for more than the manufacturers recommended time period.
- the risks from falling objects are properly controlled
- a register is kept and maintained of all access equipment, with a system to identify individual items
- permits to work are issued where access to roofs is required and there are risks associated to working there (e.g. falls from the roof or through fragile surfaces, or exposure to harmful substances discharged around roof level)

INDIVIDUALS

All CATENA employees involved with working at height must:

- follow the correct procedures
- check equipment before use (e.g. ladders, safety harnesses etc.)
- bring to the attention of management any unsafe situations or procedures
- not put themselves or others at risk.

RISK ASSESSMENT

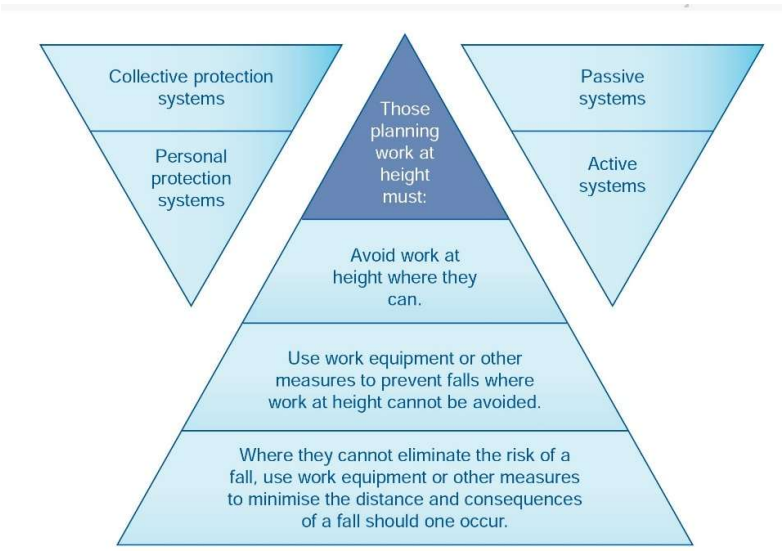
All work at height must be subject to appropriate risk assessment, the complexity of which will depend on the risk of injury that has been identified. The assessment should not just consider the height of a fall (the higher the fall, the more likely it is to cause injury, although injury may be sustained even in falls from lesser height, i.e. less than two metres), it should also take into account:

- environmental conditions (especially slippery conditions or high winds)
- materials onto, into, or through which, someone could fall (they may be hard, there may be sharp edges or impalement hazards, or they may be fragile and cannot support a person's weight).
- risks from falling materials or objects (e.g. of materials stored at height or dropped tools – barriers and warning signs may be needed to prevent access to danger areas).
- hazards of using mobile elevated work platforms (MEWP) such as trapping, crushing or being struck and the presence of any overhead cables in the vicinity.
- stability of the structure that the work equipment will be used close to or against.

The aim is to identify practical precautions that are proportionate to the risk i.e. kick stool, ladder, step ladder, mobile platform, fall protection equipment etc.
Where it is not reasonably practicable to prevent falls or mitigate their effects then residual risks should be addressed by suitable instruction, training, and safe systems of work.

Managing Work at Height Work must be planned, organised, supervised, and carried out by competent persons, using the following hierarchy of controls:

- avoid work at height wherever possible where there is a risk of significant injury
- design or modify storage and display panels so that they can be accessed from ground level.
- position lighting where it can be maintained without working at height or use banks of lighting that can be lowered to the ground.
- use long life-light bulbs that do not need to be changed so often.
- prevent falls where work at height cannot be avoided (by using suitable measures, e.g. guard rails or work platforms, that protect all workers)
- mitigate falls: minimise the distance and consequences of a fall where the risk of a fall cannot be eliminated (by using personal protective equipment, e.g. fall arrest systems)
- take additional measures if it is not reasonably practicable to avoid, prevent or mitigate falls (e.g. provide additional instruction and training, demarcate edges with painted lines).



Work at Height – control hierarchies

SELECTING ACCESS EQUIPMENT

Ladders

Ladders are only to be used as working platforms when it is NOT reasonably practicable to use any other safer method or equipment.

There are different types of access equipment that are more suitable to use than a ladder, e.g. podium steps.

- Ladders are only to be used as a means of access for low risk work at relatively low heights where the task is of short duration (i.e. accessing a bookshelf, changing a light bulb).
- in line with the recommendation of the Health and Safety Executive CATENA ladders and stepladders should be Class 1 'Industrial' or the European Standard EN 131.
- ladders not inspected or not displaying an inspection label must not be used
- If an individual does not feel that the ladders are appropriate to use whether it be because it is not suitable for the job or the ladders do not comply to CATENA safety requirements

Mobile Elevating Work Platforms / Cherry Pickers

The use of mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs) must follow HSE guidance and comply with the following:

- only trained and certified operators may use MEWPs
- a documented plan must be in place for the use of all MEWPs and is to include emergency and rescue procedures
- the plan is to be reviewed before the work commences to allow for any changes in circumstances
- a copy of the thorough examination report must be obtained, checked and kept before the equipment is allowed on site

Mobile Tower Scaffolds / Scaffolding

It is essential that only trained competent staff have access to this type of equipment and that suitable supervision is in place. The use of mobile tower scaffolds must follow HSE and PASMA guidance and consideration given to the following topics when planning and assessing their use.

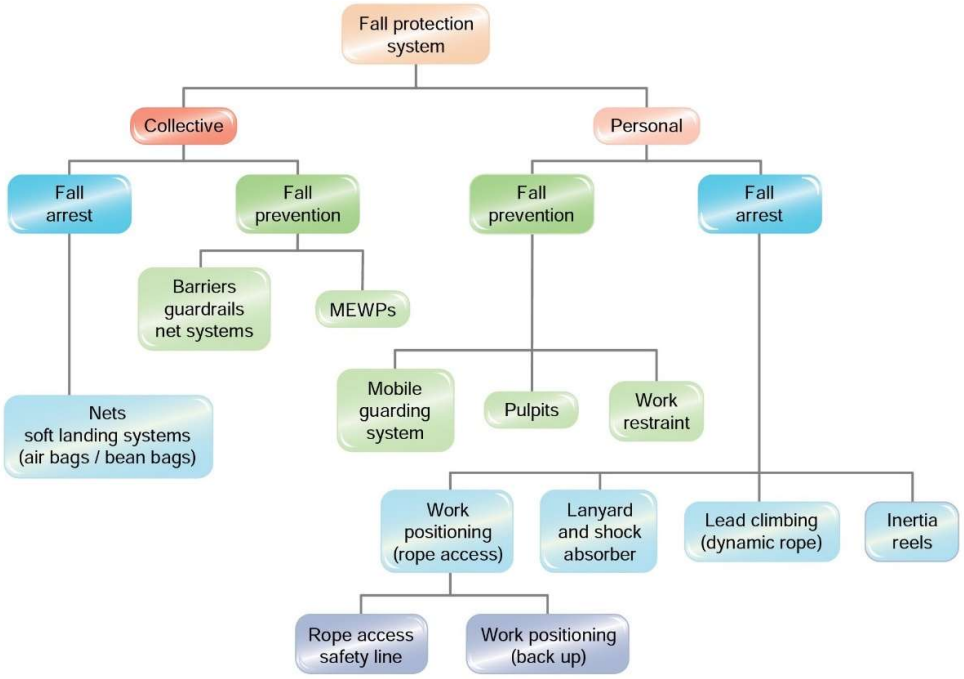
- erecting
- moving
- using
- dismantling
- inspecting
- protecting bystanders

Scaffolding must only be assembled, dismantled, or significantly modified by appropriately trained and competent contractors under competent levels of supervision and must be subject to regular inspection.

Where scaffolding is complex, it will be necessary for a competent person to draw up a plan for its assembly, use and dismantling.

PREVENTING FALLS AND MINIMISING THE CONSEQUENCES OF FALLS

CATENA is aware that it is important to remember that prevention takes priority over consequence minimisation (attest), collective measures take priority over personal protective measures, and passive measures are preferred to active measures.
We will always consider the options available for preventing falls or minimising the consequences of a fall as shown below:



Fall Protection Systems

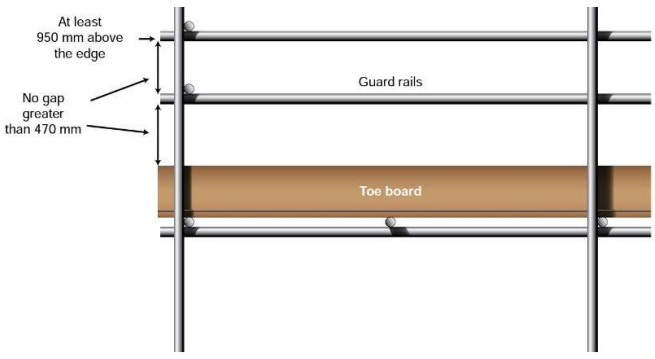
Fall Protection Equipment

Guard Rails

Guard rails will, in many cases be the best option for fall prevention as they are passive and afford collective protection.

When used as edge protection, guard rails should include or be the equivalent to:

- Main guard rail at least 950mm above the edge
- A toe board and brick guard where there is a risk of objects being kicked off the edge of the platform
- A suitable number of intermediate guard rails of suitable alternatives positioned so that there is no gap more than 470mm

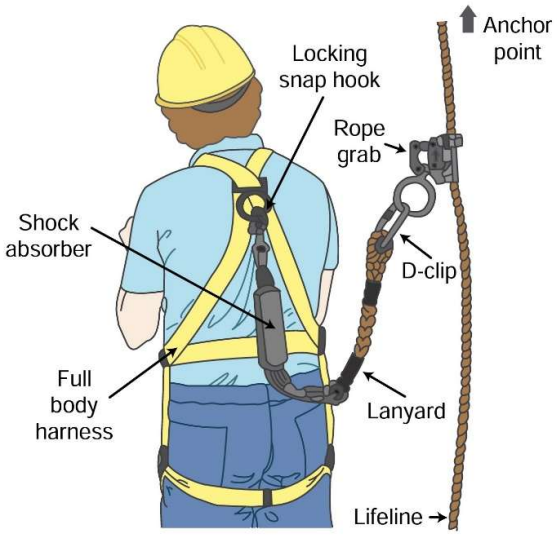


Guard rails and toe board

Work Restraint
Work restraint is a personal fall prevention system, whereby the user is physically prevented from reaching an edge by using a harness and fixed length lanyard attached to a suitably located anchor.

Falls Arrest Equipment

Lanyard and Shock absorber (or inertia reel)
A fall arrest system uses a harness connected to a reliable anchor to arrest and restrict a fall, preventing the user from colliding with the ground or structure whilst limiting the forces on the body.
The means of absorbing energy and limiting the forces on the body, once deployed, is either an energy-absorbing lanyard or an inertia reel.



Harness, lanyard and shock absorber

Inertia reels should generally be anchored in the vertical position (i.e. above the user) so that the fall factor (fall distance divided by lanyard length) is minimised.
The user should remain within a 30-degree cone (or as per manufacturers' instruction) under the anchor, as deployment at a greater angle can result in the device failing to arrest.
Harnesses and lanyards should only be selected as the LAST choice for protection against falls.
Anchorages and supporting structures, lanyards and harnesses, etc should be compatible, identifiable, regularly inspected and the inspections recorded. (*see Inspection below*)
Equipment should be properly stored to avoid contamination with dirt or chemicals, abrasion or other damage. Users should be trained in pre-use checks and how to use PPE, specifically:

- How to wear and adjust it to the body
- How to manage the lanyard and other equipment

- How to fall to minimise the risk of injury
- How to assemble the system correctly, including safe anchorages

Landing Systems

Work equipment such as safety nets or airbags can be used to provide a safe landing by minimising the distance and/or consequences of a fall.


Air bags and safety nets

Emergency Rescue

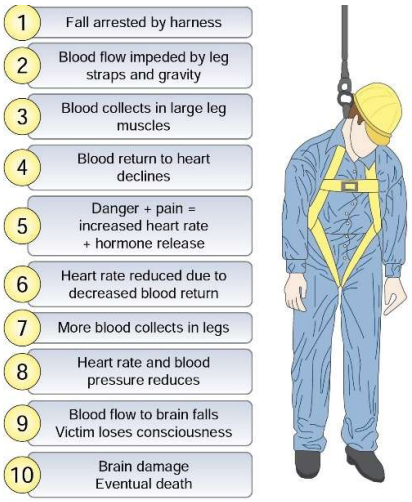
When planning for an Emergency Rescue CATENA will ensure that all rescue planning and operations address the following issues:

- The safety of the persons carrying out or assisting with the rescue
- The anchor points to be used for the rescue equipment
- The suitability of equipment (anchors, harnesses attachments and connectors) that has already arrested the fall of the casualty for use during the rescue
- The method that will be used to attach the casualty to the rescue system
- The direction that the casualty needs to be moved to get them to the point of safety (raising, lowering or lateral)
- The first aid needs the casualty may have with respect to the injury or suspension trauma
- The possible needs of the casualty following the rescue

Suspension Trauma

The term 'suspension trauma' is used to describe the situation of a person falling into suspension in a harness and then becoming unconscious. However, the loss of consciousness is not due to physical injury. Orthostasis (motionless vertical suspension) means that venous blood in the legs cannot be helped back to the heart to be oxygenated and circulated to the brain by movement of the leg muscles. The lack of blood flow to the brain leads to a faint. Normally during a faint, the body falls to the horizontal position

enabling blood to return to the brain. This cannot happen here as the casualty is suspended vertically. If the brain is starved of oxygen for to long it is fatal.



The longer the casualty is suspended without moving, the greater the chances are of suspension trauma developing and the more serious it is likely to be.
An injured person hanging in a harness awaiting rescue should be removed from upright suspension as quickly as possible (ideally within 10 minutes), especially if the casualty has been motionless.
A conscious casualty should be encouraged to exercise their legs gently, to stimulate circulation of the blood.
During the recue, if possible, the casualty should be positioned with the lower limbs slightly elevated. After the rescue, the casualty should be in an upright sitting position, with knees bent – NOT lying flat.
The casualty should only be placed in a fully horizontal position on the advice of qualified personnel.
Emergency services should be alerted early of suspected suspension trauma as the casualty might need dialysis to protect the kidneys.

Personal fall protection systems such as lanyards and harnesses must only be used if the risk assessment indicates that the use of safer collective controls is not feasible.

All staff using fall protection systems must be adequately trained in their use and there must be an adequate rescue plan in place.

Inspection
Every item of equipment used for work at height should be subject to the following procedures: -

- each item of equipment for work at height should be individually identifiable.

- each item of equipment should be tagged to show the identification marker and that it is in a safe condition for use, showing the date of the next formal inspection.
- each item of equipment should be subject to periodic formal inspections (e.g. 6 monthly intervals, or more regularly dependent on use and environmental conditions).
- each item of equipment must be subject to a thorough visual inspection before use.
- equipment must be re-inspected should an incident occur that may have caused the equipment to become unsafe; and for external equipment should bad weather conditions be experienced.
- a full register of equipment must be maintained and the findings from each periodic inspection or re-inspection due to an incident or an occurrence be recorded, along with any actions taken to show rectification or disposal of unsafe equipment.
- access to equipment for working at height should be controlled and only be available to and used by competent personnel who have received the required training.
- all ordinary and extension ladders over 3m long, including all stepladders and trestles providing a working platform or tread height exceeding 2m, are to be inspected at intervals not exceeding six months
- personal fall protection equipment must be inspected before first use and then at least every six months or after circumstances which might jeopardize safety have occurred

Roof Access / Fragile Surfaces

The Director is responsible for ensuring that no unauthorised persons have access to roofs. Doors, hatches etc. leading to roofs must be locked and access must be subject to a permit to work system. Individuals must not be allowed to use roof safety systems unless they have received appropriate training.

When placing contracts for work on a roof CATENA will ensure that contractors provide a method statement, risk assessment and proof of training before commencing work on the roof. Where work on or near fragile roofs cannot be avoided then all reasonably practicable control measures will be implemented to mitigate the possibility of falls of people or objects.

The control measures must include: -

- the selection and use of suitable platforms, coverings, guard rails to minimise the risk of falls or falling objects.
- where there is a residual risk remaining then minimise the distance and effect of a fall.
- implement the use of suitable and sufficient barriers, warning notices and signage to clearly indicate and warn others of the danger zone.
- access and egress should be restricted to authorised persons only and using the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at all times.

Contractors

CATENA contractors who conduct work at height must have their own health and safety policies to ensure the risks to their staff, sub-contractors and CATENA occupants are adequately managed. They must conduct a suitable and sufficient risk assessment and work to approved method statements with adequate control measures to mitigate the risk of injury to themselves or others.

The Director will be responsible for the contractors and ensure that any work at height carried out during the activities is adequately managed and risks controlled.

Procedures for Dealing with Health and Safety Issues

Where an employee raises a health and safety problem related to work at height, the company will:

- take all necessary steps to investigate the circumstances
- take corrective measures where appropriate
- advise the employee of actions taken

COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

It is a legal requirement for the company to establish arrangements to communicate and consult with employees on issues affecting their health and safety and to take account of their views.

To achieve this objective, we will:

- establish effective lines of communication
- involve and consult with employees through:
    - individual conversations
    - notice boards
    - internal publications
    - staff meetings
    - health and safety meetings
- consult with employees when changes to processes, equipment, work methods etc. are to be introduced that may affect their health and safety

MONITORING COMPLIANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS

Overall responsibility for policy implementation and review rests with the Managing Director. However, all employees are obliged to adhere to and support the implementation of the policy. The Company will inform all employees of the policy and any amendments to the policy

Additional Information

If you require any additional information or clarification regarding this policy, please contact the CATENA office.