

# HEALTH & SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS FOR MANAGEMENT OF WORK AT HEIGHT

## INTRODUCTION

Cwmni CYNNAL recognises that accidents can arise from working at height. Falls from height can be a cause of injury and absence from work and may result in permanent disability and death. These arrangements provide managers and supervisors with guidance for managing all work at height. These arrangements were produced by following The Work at Height Regulations 2005 & INDG402: Safe use of ladders and stepladders.

## DEFINITION OF WORKING AT HEIGHT

A place is deemed '**at height**' if a person could be injured falling from it, even if it is at or below ground level. For example;

- falls from ladders
- falls from machinery or vehicles
- falls from open edges
- falls through roof lights
- falls through fragile roofs
- falls from scaffolding or similar access equipment

The most common factors identified in falls from height incidents involve failure to:

- recognise a problem;
- provide safe systems of work;
- ensure that safe systems of work are followed;
- provide adequate information, instruction, training or supervision;
- use appropriate equipment;
- provide safe equipment.

## MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of management to:

- **FOLLOW** the hierarchy for managing risks from working at height;
- **AVOID** work at height where ever possible;
- use work equipment, or other measures, to **PREVENT** falls where they cannot avoid working at height; and
- where the risk of a fall cannot be eliminated completely, use work equipment or other measures to **MINIMISE** the distance and consequences of a fall - should one occur.

### Planning work at height

- Ensure that no work is done at height if it is safe and reasonably practicable to do it other than at height. Whenever possible, avoid working at height if it is reasonable practicable and safer to do so another way.
- Ensure that the work is properly planned, organised and appropriately supervised to be as safe as is reasonably practicable, and ensure all work at height is only carried out by trained competent persons.
- Undertake risk assessments and implement the necessary controls for any work at height activities (*see appendix 1*)

- Plan for emergencies and rescue.
- Choose the right work equipment and select collective measures to prevent falls (such as guardrails and working platforms) before other measures which may only mitigate the distance and consequences of a fall (such as nets or airbags) or which may only provide personal protection from a fall.
- Where a residual risk exists, provide personal protection such as a harness and suitable training on their use.
- Ensure all work at height takes account of weather conditions that could endanger health and safety.
- Ensure the place where work at height is done is safe/segregated (e.g. no running pupils in schools).
- Ensure equipment for work at height is appropriately inspected.
- The risks from fragile surfaces are properly controlled.
- The risks from falling objects are properly controlled.
- The area below the work being undertaken is secured to prevent injury to persons below.

### **Management systems**

Managers in control of any tasks undertaken at work are responsible to ensure appropriate management systems are in place to ensure the following :

- Systems exist to ensure the regular maintenance and inspection of work equipment is undertaken as required within the manufactures / suppliers' instructions and appropriate records are maintained (*see Appendix 2 for Ladder Checklist*)
- Risk assessments for any work undertaken "at height" take account of the equipment provided for that work
- Reports of all accidents/incidents involving work at height are investigated and reported as outlined within the Health and Safety Management Arrangements for Reporting & Investigating Accidents and Incidents
- All staff are provided with relevant information, instruction and training with regard to the risks identified and any safe systems of work / working procedures implemented to eliminate or reduce the risk of harm from work at height (*see Appendix 3 for Ladder Toolbox Talk*).
- That any safety marking relating to the setting up, use and putting away of any equipment are clearly visible.
- That adequate warnings are provided for the use of the equipment against specific hazards.
- The use of work equipment is restricted only to persons specifically trained for the use of that equipment, and that it is used according to the manufacture's/supplier's instructions

### **Third party control**

It is the responsibility of management who arrange for any work being carried out by contractors on the company's premises to ensure it is properly supervised. It is also the responsibility of managers to challenge contractors if they are posing a risk to CYNNAL employees, themselves or members of the public who may be affected.

## **EMPLOYEES RESPONSIBILITIES**

Employees have a duty of care for their own and others safety and should :

- Attend and follow training for working at height
- Not use or operate any work equipment for which they have not been trained
- Carry out pre use checks on equipment that has been provided for work at height

- Report any defects to their supervisor or manager regarding any work equipment that has been provided for work at height
- Follow any safe working procedures / method statements that has been provided to carry out work at height safely
- Familiarise themselves with any significant findings of risk assessments and raise any concerns over control measures with their supervisor
- Not interfere with any measures put in place for the health and safety of themselves or others.

### **LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES & ARRANGEMENTS**

These arrangements should be read in conjunction with;

- CYNNAL Health and Safety policy, which identifies the roles and responsibilities of all employees and managers
- Risk Assessment for Working at Height
- Health & Safety Management Arrangements for Reporting & Investigating Accidents and Incidents (including Industrial Injuries)
- Health & Safety Management Arrangements for the Provision and Use of Work Equipment

### **CONTROL MEASURES / IMPLEMENTATION**

- Provide training for staff likely to be working at height.
- Inform school beforehand that work area needs to be made clear.
- Try to work in empty classrooms as default method.
- Put pressure on school staff to segregate the working area, keeping pupils away from the work area. If area cannot be cleared, refuse to commence / carry out work.
- Arrange to work in pairs. Supervise / store unused tools.
- Do not request staff to work at height that they feel uncomfortable with.
- Only PASMA qualified staff to use scaffolding / access platforms.
- Use CYNNAL ladders, checking 'laddertag' beforehand.
- Implement a system for regularly checking safety of work at height tools/equipment.

## PLANNING WORK AT HEIGHT

**The following issues should be considered when planning any work at height;**

- What activity/task is being carried out
- How long the task will take
- Suitability of the equipment
- Failure of the equipment
- Falls from height (severity)
- Falling objects
- Weather conditions
- Manual Handling (carrying ladders + equipment)

**These controls can be implemented when carrying out any work at height;**

- Ensure the correct equipment is selected and used
- Short duration work only for ladders
- Secure ladder (top or bottom, preferably both)
- Use cherry pickers, scaffolding, fall arrest equipment etc
- Frequent inspections of equipment and implement a defect reporting systems
- Training of staff and supervisors
- 2 people to carry out the job (no lone working)
- Tool belts to be worn or equipment passed up to staff
- Inspection of ground before use
- Supervision of staff
- Consideration of weather conditions

**Employees should receive information, instruction and training for all work activities they perform. They should also be provided with information on the hazards of working at height such as :**

- Leaning ladders slipping as they are not secured
- Overstretching on a ladder or from access towers, cherry pickers etc
- Faulty ladder, scaffolding, access tower due to no formal inspection regime or defect reporting system in place
- Slipping or loosing your footing due to poor footwear or stretching
- Stepladders wobbling due to missing feet or due to incorrect use
- Not positioning the ladder correctly
- Not checking ground conditions
- Working in inclement weather



Appendix 2

## LADDER CHECKLIST

## TOOLBOX TALK ON LADDER SAFETY

Establish that the ladder or stepladder is in a safe condition before using it, carrying out a visual inspection on its condition...if you think it's unsafe **DO NOT USE IT!**

### USE A SAFE LADDER

Make sure the ladder has safety feet. Check the condition of the ladder before. Make sure the ladder is stored safely after each use.

### POSITION THE LADDER CORRECTLY

Make sure the ladder stands on firm ground and rests against a solid surface. Make sure both feet have good contact with the ground so it does not slip.

### KEEP THE LADDER LEVEL

The ladder should never tilt sideways. On sloping ground or stairs, use an approved levelling adjuster and secure the ladder at the top and bottom. Last resort is to have someone foot the ladder

### 3 POINTS OF CONTACT

Always maintain at least 3 points of contact with the ladder. This will help with your stability. This can be 2 feet and one hand, 2 feet and your mid-rift etc

### 4:1 RULE

The base of the ladder should always be one metre from the wall for every four metres in height. (8 metres up = 2 metres out). Don't step on the top two rungs, get a longer ladder if necessary

### SECURE THE LADDER

Use rope, lashings or straps to secure a ladder at the top and bottom to prevent it from slipping. Secure it at the bottom if there is a risk of it moving away from the building or structure. Last resort is to have someone footing the ladder. If it's tied it won't slip!

### FACE FORWARD

Don't twist or turn on the ladder. Step up or down the ladder one rung at a time. Don't use the ladder if someone else is on it. Always pay attention to the job in hand.

### KEEP YOUR HANDS FREE

You need both hands to climb. Carry light tools in a shoulder bag or tool belt. Pull up bulky or heavy items after you reach the top.

### OVERSTRETCHING

Do not overstretch when using a ladder; if your waist isn't within the stiles (sides) of the ladder, you're leaning too far. Keep you navel inside the stiles of the ladder at all times. Otherwise it could topple!

## EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Avoid work at height where possible. Consider whether the job can be done from the ground
2. Use a ladder safely and for the purpose it is intended
3. Inspect a ladder before use
4. Maintain at least 3 points of contact at all times
5. Follow the 4:1 rule when using an extendable ladder
6. Do not stretch, over-reach or twist when using a ladder. If you can't reach, move the ladder closer
7. Consider service users, public, colleagues and others that could be struck by falling objects (use barriers to segregate the work area)
8. Postpone any external ladder work if the weather is bad
9. Only use ladders for short duration tasks only (30 minutes maximum)
10. Report any unsafe working conditions/defects
11. Stop work if they feel the job is unsafe or hazardous, and convey concerns

## RISK ASSESSMENT

A risk assessment is an assessment of a task, in this instance working at height. Carrying out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment will help you identify what precautions are needed to protect you from harm. A risk assessment is just thinking about what task you are going to do, how you are going to do it, and what safe systems of work you are going to follow.

Ask your Manager if you can see the risk assessment if you feel a job is unsafe. You should NEVER carry out work at height unless a risk assessment has been carried out and controls are in place.

Before you do any job, make sure you have done an on-the-spot assessment or a dynamic risk assessment. If you spot a hazard or feel the job is not safe, then speak to your Manager. Assess each job individually for risks or hazards.

## EXTENDABLE LADDER INSPECTIONS

Before using an extendable ladder, it is YOUR responsibility to check its condition before proceeding. You should be looking out for :

1. loose steps or rungs - remove from use: repair or discard
2. damaged screws or bolts - remove from use: repair or discard
3. warped, twisted or bent stiles - discard: do not attempt repair
4. cracked or split stiles or rungs - discard: do not attempt repair
5. damaged or missing feet - remove from use: repair or discard

## STEPLADDER INSPECTIONS

Before using a stepladder ladder it is YOUR responsibility to check its condition before proceeding. You should be looking out for :

1. loose/bent hinge spreaders - remove from use: repair or discard
2. loose hinges - remove from use: repair or discard
3. broken stop on hinge spreaders - discard: do not attempt repair
4. missing or damaged rungs - discard: do not attempt repair
5. missing or damaged feet - remove from use: repair or discard
6. wobbly or unstable - remove from use: repair or discard

Your Manager will also ensure recorded periodic inspections are carried out using the company's Ladder Inspection Checklist.

## **COMMON CAUSES OF WORK AT HEIGHT ACCIDENTS**

- Unsuitable equipment
- Leaning Ladder slipping
- Overstretching
- Equipment Failure
- Slipping or loosing footing
- Bad weather
- Poor ground conditions
- Lack of competence
- Horseplay/messing around

## **COMMON CONTROL MEASURES**

1. Check the risk assessment
2. Secure the ladder (top/bottom)
3. Move the ladder closer
4. Inspections (visual and formal)
5. Correct footwear
6. Postpone the work
7. Inspect the ground/area before
8. Provide training to employees
9. Supervision from Manager

## **CLASSES OF LADDERS**

You should NEVER use domestic ladders in work. Check the label on the ladder. You should be using EN131 or Class 1 (industrial)

## **THINGS TO AVOID**

Never position a ladder:

1. Within the area of overhead power lines
2. Where it can be knocked by a window or door (lock them)
3. Where service users or the public can walk under them (barrier off)
4. Against a fragile surface, such as plastic guttering or a window
5. Where it can struck be a passing vehicle