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Work At Height Regulations

c&a

WAHR

The New Work at Height Regulations came into force in April 2005. The Regulations apply to all work at any height where there is a risk of a fall liable to cause personal injury (the old two metre rule has gone). The Regulations bring together all existing work at height regulation and state the minimum requirements for the use of equipment for work at height. Employers have a duty to ensure that work at a height is properly planned, appropriately supervised and carried out in a manner that is safe.

All employers, the self-employed, and any person that controls the work of others, for example facilities managers or building owners who may contract others to work at height should be fully up-to-date with the new legislation.

Between 65 and 70 deaths and over 4,000 serious injuries occur every year from falls at height at work. Experience shows that fall from height incidents usually arise due to poor management control rather than equipment failure.

Common factors include:

- Failure to recognise a problem.
- Failure to ensure that safe systems of work are followed.
- Failure to provide safe systems of work.
- Inadequate information, instruction, training or supervision provided.
- Failure to use appropriate equipment.
- Failure to provide safe plant/equipment.

A couple of key Work at Height Regulations are:

Regulation 4:

Organisation and planning

Every employer shall ensure that work at height is:—

- (a) properly planned;
- (b) appropriately supervised; and
- (c) carried out in a manner which is so far as is reasonably practicable, safe.

Regulation 6:

Avoidance of risks from work at height

- (1) In identifying the measures required by this regulation, every employer shall take account of a risk assessment under regulation three of the Management Regulations.



(2) Every employer shall ensure that work is not carried out at height where it is reasonably practicable to carry out the work safely otherwise than at height.

Falls from Height is a priority programme for the Health and Safety Commission (HSC). Information on preventing falls from height can be found on the HSE website at www.hse.gov.uk/falls/index.htm

*Statutory Instrument 2005 No. 735, www.hmso.gov.uk/si/si20050735.htm

New British Standard to support Work at Height Rules

To support the new regulations, BSI has published a new British Standard:

BS 8437:2005 Code of practice for selection, use and maintenance of personal fall protection systems and equipment for use in the workplace.

This new standard is intended to help employers comply with the Work at Height Regulations. It brings together personal fall protection best practice from a range of sources including HSE representatives, manufacturers, research studies and training organizations.

BS 8437 gives recommendations and guidance with illustrative examples on the following key areas of working at height:

- Competent working, planning and organization
- Selection, use and maintenance of personal fall protection systems
- Systems and equipment suitable for use in rescue
- Control of risks from fragile surfaces
- Rescue of persons in the event of an accident

- Risk assessment
- The training of users of the equipment.

Who should use BS 8437?

The standard is intended to help:

- Users of personal fall protection systems and equipment, including employers, employees and the self-employed.
- Designers of safe access routes on buildings and structures, including architects and structural engineers.
- Commissioners of work at a height, e.g. building owners and contractors.
- Trainers and site managers involved in training persons for work at a height.

A copy of the standard costs £178, discounted to £89 for BSI Subscribing Members

When should I wear a harness?

IPAF and the CPA have issued definitive guidance on the use of harnesses with aerial lifts.

H-1 SAFETY HARNESSES IN MOBILE ELEVATING WORK PLATFORMS

BOOM TYPE PLATFORMS

It is strongly recommended that a full body harness with an adjustable lanyard (used to provide work restraint and adjusted to be as short as possible) is used when working from a boom type Mobile Elevating Work Platform (MEWP).

This would include: Self Propelled Booms (SPB), Trailer Push-around (TP), Vehicle Mounted Platforms (VMP26 & 100) and (IAD)

VERTICAL LIFTS

It is not normally necessary for personnel working from a vertical lift to wear fall protection equipment, other than in exceptional circumstances.

This would include: Scissor Lifts (SL) and Vertical Personnel Platforms (VPP)

THE NEED FOR A FALL PROTECTION SYSTEM WILL BE THE OUTCOME OF A JOB SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO WORK COMMENCING.

For information on preventing falls and the use of harness and lanyards in MEWPs see:

- HSE Information Leaflet MISC614 Preventing falls from boom-type mobile elevating platforms. (available from the HSE website at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/fallindx.htm>)

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All training centres above offer IPAF approved and audited courses for Operators of Mobile aerial work platforms, European directives require that all staff are fully and adequately trained in the safe use of the equipment they operate.

See www.ipaf.org for full listing