

Safe Working Practices:

SWP- 04 Work at Height

Before doing any type of work you must carry out an assessment of the task to be undertaken. This will include the equipment to be worked on, the task itself, the work area and environment, personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements plus the tools and equipment required to carry out the job safely. Consult your team leader if you are not satisfied the job can be carried out in a safe manner.

GENERAL

- 1.0 Working at height is working at any level where a person could be injured falling from it, even if it is below ground.
- 1.1 Working at height should always be avoided unless absolutely necessary. However, it is recognised that working at height is often unavoidable and sometimes the only option.
- 1.2 Whilst these instructions are specifically for Forklift Trucks they will apply in most instances of working at height.
- 1.3 Prepare the work area in accordance with SWP-01 "Work Area", ensuring that the surrounding area is cordoned off to prevent pedestrians from entering a hazardous area. Additional consideration should be given to the work area in respect of overhead lighting, cables, heaters etc. as well as environmental conditions, such as wet or damp.
- 1.4 Non-essential personnel should be excluded from the work area to prevent injury from falling objects, see SWP "Work Area". All others involved must wear appropriate PPE i.e. hard hat, overalls and industrial shoes as a minimum.
- 1.5 Access by climbing with the use of the fall arrest harness and lanyard is not permitted under lone working situations or where there is no means of summoning assistance in the event of an accident. See also SM-20 Welfare, WPRA "Working at Height" and WPRA "Working Alone".
- 1.6 In all circumstances the engineer must advise the site management that he will be working at height and request that someone is assigned to carryout 15 minute checks to determine that the technician is not in difficulty.
- 1.7 When working at height or manoeuvring around masts extra care must be taken to ensure that the surface worked on, shoes, tools and your hands are all free from obstruction and, in particular, oil and grease contamination.
- 1.8 If possible, the machine should be reversed carefully into a corner to provide a three sided protection barrier. The two walls and the machines mast will prevent falls in three of four possible directions. The fourth side is required for access.
- 1.9 SWP-41 Working on Masts must be followed at all times.
- 1.10 If using mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPS), an order picker (OP/OME) or any other working platform for maintenance purposes, including the maintenance of other MHE, a work restraint system must be used. This includes a full body harness connected to a lanyard which is connected to an anchor point on the MEWP basket or order picker. From the anchor point, the lanyard length should be short enough to prevent a person reaching a position where they

Safe Working Practices:

SWP- 04 Work at Height

could fall. If no restraint system is to be used a job specific risk assessment must be completed and forwarded to the QSE team prior to work commencing.

Customers Equipment

- 2.0 The use of working platforms must adhere to HSE guidance PM-28. A customer may provide equipment for working at height. Although it is the customers' responsibility to ensure that any equipment they provide meets all current legal requirements in the interests of safety the following should be observed.

Mobile Elevating Working Platforms (MEWP) e.g. Scissor Lifts or Boom Lifts

- 2.2 Any operator of this equipment **MUST** be trained and records held. The MEWP should be in full working order and fit for purpose, i.e. appropriate guards and rails must be in place and undamaged, gates should return automatically to the closed position and prevented from opening (locked) when the platform is raised, the identification plate should be clearly visible and legible etc.
- 2.3 If the technician has any doubts as to the suitability and/or condition of a MEWP he should not proceed with the work, he should also advise the customer accordingly.

Working Platforms (Non-Integrated) On Forklift Trucks (e.g. Cage placed on the forks of a F.L.T.)

- 2.4 Occasional use of non-integrated working platforms with forklift trucks is allowed for non-routine maintenance tasks for which it is impractical to hire in purpose built access equipment.
- 2.5 If the customer provides an approved work cage for attachment to a fork lift truck the technician must ensure that apart from the check for obvious defects, the following advice on use should be observed:
- The tilt, side shift and reach functions must be **disabled**.
 - The truck operator must remain at the controls when the platform is elevated.
 - The parking brake must be applied and only minor controlled positional adjustments are permitted.
 - The technician must ensure that he can be easily heard and understood by the truck operator.

Scaffold Towers/ Aircraft ladders

- 2.6 If the customer provides a scaffold tower or aircraft ladders for use by the technician when working at height, he/she should examine any such equipment for obvious defects, only if in the technician's opinion it is safe to use may he/she proceed with the work.

The following points should be observed as a minimum:

- Make sure the tower/ladders are resting on firm level ground with the castors or base plates properly supported and locked.

Safe Working Practices:

SWP- 04 Work at Height

- Never use a tower/ladders with any broken or missing parts. If the technician has any doubts as to the suitability and/or condition of a scaffold tower he/she should not proceed with the work. He/she should also advise the customer accordingly.

Scaffold Towers:

- Stabilisers or outriggers may be required, refer to instruction manual for guidance.
- There must be safe access to the work platform, for example via an appropriately designed built-in ladder. Climbing on the rungs is not permitted, unless they are specifically designed for that purpose.
- Suitable edge protection, toe boards and guard rails must be fitted and in good condition.

TMHUK Equipment

3.0 TMHUK have issued the following equipment to all team members who may need to work at height, this comprises of;

- a. Ladder (little giant)
- b. scaff tag for ladders
- c. Helmet
- d. Harness
- e. Work Positioning belt
- f. lanyard with 2 scaffold hooks
- g. short strap (to tie off ladder)
- h. long strap (to tie off ladder)
- i. whistle
- j. tool bag

plus any other additional, relevant, personal protective equipment (PPE).

3.1 This equipment must be used when there is no other safer means of access available.

Ladders use

4.0 Ladders can be used for working at height when the use of other work equipment is not justified because of the low risk and short duration (short duration means working on a ladder for no more than 30 minutes at a time)

- No ladder should be used unless it is:
 - Securely fixed, tied or footed to its upper resting place
 - On a firm level footing and is not standing on loose bricks or similar loose packing.
 - Equally and properly supported on each side or stile.
 - Extended at least 3 rungs past the stepping off point or the highest rung to be reached by the person using the ladder. This does not apply if there are other adequate hand holds available.
- Only competent persons may use a ladder.
- Set up to at least 75 degrees (i.e. 1m out for every 4m up).
- Is used for short periods only (30 minutes max).
- Only used where there are no other options.
- Any brace fitted is working & locking correctly.
- Used away from any doorways - seek assistance if unavoidable.
- Ensure ladder is tall enough for the task.

Safe Working Practices:

SWP- 04 Work at Height



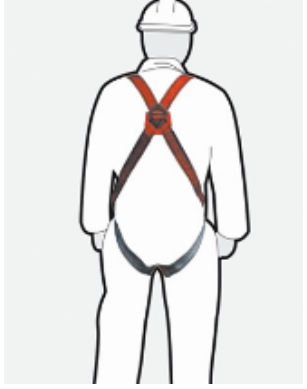
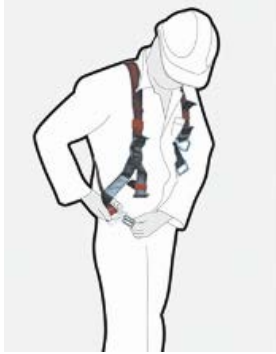
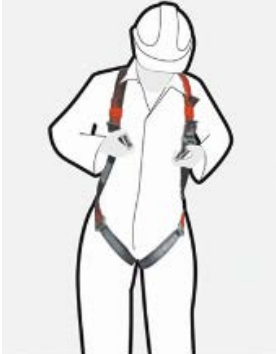

- Not used within 6m of ANY power lines.
- Steps should be free from debris, damage and not slippery.
- Is uniquely identified and have an in-date tag.

- 4.1 Step ladders should be used with the steps facing the work activity, not “side-on”.
- 4.2 Users should avoid holding items when climbing – for example by using tool bags. If a harness and lanyard is used, it should **not** be secured to the ladder.
- 4.3 A harness is not required if using the ladder for access purposes only, however, must be used if working from the ladder.

Harness and lanyard use

Six Steps to Proper Safety Harness Use

- 4.4 When first issued with your harness we recommend that you follow the fitting instructions detailed below and as per training received:

		
Hold the harness by the rear D-ring and shake it to allow the straps to fall into place.	Place arms through the shoulder straps, ensuring the webbing remains untwisted.	Ensure the D-ring is in the middle of the back between the shoulder blades. Adjust shoulder straps so the sub pelvis strap sits under the buttocks
		
Pull each thigh strap through the legs and fasten the buckles. Adjust the tension	Connect the chest strap and adjust so that the shoulder straps are centred on each shoulder and tighten.	Once all straps are buckled, tighten them so that the harness fits comfortably and does not pinch or restrict movement.

Safe Working Practices:

SWP- 04 Work at Height

or release the slack as necessary.		
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Six Steps to climbing

- Ensure adequate hand holds are obtained and that the selected foot and hand holds are free from oil or grease contamination.
- Clip your lanyard onto a suitable anchorage, as high and central as possible, and in such a way as to allow you to climb up to the point where it is possible to connect your second lanyard and reposition your first lanyard for the next climb.
- Use the lanyard on the shorter position wherever practicable, attached to the front eyelet of your harness. Remember that the lanyard is not a climbing aid.
- Always remember that a three-point contact must be maintained with the machine (both hands and a foot or both feet and one hand grip) whilst climbing.
- Once into position secure your work positioning belt to allow the freedom of movement for work, this will also maintain 3 points of contact.
- Do not climb or work unless safely connected by the harness and lanyard to the machine.

Emergency Escape

- 4.0 All technicians must ensure that the site contact is aware that working at height will be taking place, and request that someone is assigned to carryout 15-minute checks to determine that the technician is not in difficulty.
- 4.1 A whistle is provided to alert others should the technician get into difficulties.
- 4.2 Access equipment (mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPS), order picker (OP/OME) or any other working platform) can be used for rescue purposes.

Children and Young Persons

- 5.0 See Safety & Environmental Manual procedure "Employment of Young Persons" for precise definitions on children and young persons.
- 5.1 "Children" will not be allowed to work at height (see 1.0 above). They may be allowed to observe such operations and work practices, but must take no active part, be kept at a safe distance and under the constant supervision of a competent person.
- 5.2 "Young Persons" may be allowed to work at height subject to the conditions imposed above and only when under the constant supervision of a competent person.

Records

- 6.0 All Company owned working at height equipment require a biannual inspection by a competent person. "Competent" means able to recognise signs of excessive wear and tear, mechanical damage and/or corrosion.

Safe Working Practices:

SWP- 04 Work at Height

- 6.1 The inspection should be recorded on the company Special Tool Examination Planner.
- 6.2 In addition, all company issued ladders are to have a 'scaff tag' attached and inspection dates recorded.