

Code of practice for

Temporarily installed suspended scaffolds and access equipment

Committees responsible for this British Standard

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- Associated Offices Technical Committee
- Building Employers Confederation
- Contract Cleaning and Maintenance Association
- Department of the Environment (Property Services Agency)
- Federation of Wire Rope Manufacturers of Great Britain
- Health and Safety Executive
- Institution of Structural Engineers
- National Association of Scaffolding Contractors
- National Federation of Master Steeplejacks and Lightning Conductor Engineers
- National Federation of Painting and Decorating Contractors
- Royal Institute of British Architects
- Suspended Access Equipment Manufacturers Association

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Foreword

This British Standard has been prepared under the direction of the Civil Engineering and Building Structures Standards Policy Committee. It supersedes BS 5974:1982 which is withdrawn.

This code relates to suspended scaffolds and working platforms other than those which are permanent installations on a completed building.

This edition introduces technical changes but it does not reflect a full review or revision of the standard which will be undertaken in due course.

The principal changes from the 1982 edition are as follows.

- a) Section 5 dealing with work on site and use of equipment has been rewritten.
- b) The maximum safe loads on steel scaffold tubes are now given as rounded down values.
- c) The drawings showing typical arrangements of equipment have been extensively revised.
- d) The clause on electrical requirements has been completely revised.
- e) Recommendations have been added on aerial transfer, i.e. changing or the repositioning of suspension ropes whilst the cradle remains suspended.

Since some of the construction work detailed uses scaffolding materials, reference may need to be made to BS 1139 and BS 5973.

Certain equipment may be used for both temporary works and as a permanent installation.

Where permanently installed equipment, in accordance with the recommendations in BS 6037, is temporarily rigged with a cradle, platform or chair, brought to site, as necessary, to facilitate cleaning or maintenance operation, the complete installation and the method by which it is used should be in accordance with clauses 22, 23 and 24 of this standard.

It should be recognized that the requirement for safe and efficient window cleaning and facade maintenance procedures can, in general, only be satisfied by the installation of a permanent system with dedicated cradles as recommended in BS 6037.

A British Standard does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users of British Standards are responsible for their correct application.

This code of practice represents a standard of good practice and takes the form of recommendations. Compliance with it does not confer immunity from relevant legal obligations.

Summary of pages

This document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, pages i to iv, pages 1 to 44, an inside back cover and a back cover.

This standard has been updated (see copyright date) and may have had amendments incorporated. This will be indicated in the amendment table on the inside front cover.

Section 1. General

1 Scope

This code of practice makes recommendations for the construction and use of temporarily installed suspended scaffolds and access equipment, comprising a working platform or platforms, work cage, cradle or safety chair, which are to be dismantled after the completion of the work for which they were erected. The equipment referred to is suspended by ropes from the outriggers of a roof rig or similar equipment and capable of being raised and lowered by means of lifting appliances which may be manually or power operated. In certain cases horizontal traversing is also provided.

Recommendations for slung scaffolds, being working platforms suspended on tubes or wires but not permitting raising or lowering, are contained in BS 5973.

For permanently installed suspended access equipment reference should be made to BS 6037.

NOTE The titles of the publications referred to in this code are listed on the inside back cover.

2 Definitions

For the purposes of this code the definitions given in BS 5973 apply (except for terms also listed here), together with the following (see Figure 1).

2.1 bay

that section of a platform between any two adjacent suspension points

2.2 building

a completed building, a building during construction, an engineering construction or any works or face which the suspended scaffold services

2.3 cantilever length of outriggers

the length of the outrigger which extends unsupported

NOTE It is frequently not the same as the "projection length" and should not be used in the calculation of the moments for stability.

2.4 climbing device

a lifting appliance manually or power operated through which the suspension rope passes controlled either by friction grips or by turns of the rope round drums within the appliance. The lower end of the rope is not anchored to the climbing device

2.5 counterweight

a weight or series of weights to counterbalance the overturning forces on the roof rig and provide the required factor of safety

NOTE This usually comprises the self-weight of the inboard portion of the roof rig plus added kentledge.

2.6 Cradle

A rigid decked unit with toe boards and guard rail, and with attachment points for suspension ropes (see 2.31).

2.6.1 travelling cradle¹⁾

a cradle which is suspended from rolling blocks on a fixed track allowing lateral movement

2.6.2 painters cradle

a lightweight manually operated suspended cradle usually restricted to use by two persons

2.7 fulcrum point

the point of pivoting nearest to the outside edge of the roof rig about which the balancing moments of the roof rig are calculated

2.8 lashing

a rope intended for joining two or more objects, such as scaffolding, at the points of intersection

2.9 lever arms

the distances between the fulcrum point and the centre of gravity of any weights, including the self-weight of the roof rig

NOTE These lengths may be shorter than the whole length of the inboard or the outboard portion of the roof rig.

2.10 lifting appliance

a crab, winch, pulley block or gin wheel or other device used for raising and lowering as specified in the appropriate Statutory Regulations

2.11 lifting gear

chains, ropes, slings, rings, hooks, shackles, girder clamps, swivels, eye bolts, girder runners and trolleys and similar gear as specified in the appropriate Statutory Regulations

¹⁾ Normally restricted to painters cradles.

2.12**maximum total suspended load**

the maximum force which can be imposed on the roof rig including the safe working load on the platform, the self-weight of the platform and the suspension and safety ropes together with any portion of the means of suspension and the rope tensions, plus any extra force resulting from the operation of the equipment and environmental loads

2.13**safe working load**

the maximum allowable working load on the equipment during use

2.14**outrigger**

the cantilevered portion of the roof rig or roof trolley from which the cradle is suspended

2.15**projection length**

the distance between the fulcrum point and the suspension point

NOTE 1 This length is greater than the distance from the vertical part of the suspension rope to the face of the building.
NOTE 2 The projection length is the length which is to be used in the calculation of moments for stability.

2.16**traversing**

moving laterally across the face of the building either manually or mechanically and operated from the working platform

2.17**roof rig**

that portion of the equipment (excluding the track) mounted on the roof or at roof level to support and position the suspended platform

2.18**inboard portion of the roof rig**

that portion of the roof rig which is inside the fulcrum point, i.e. on the roof side of the fulcrum point

2.19**outboard portion of the roof rig**

that portion of the roof rig which is on the outside of the fulcrum point, i.e. not on the roof side of the fulcrum point

2.20**mobile roof rig**

a roof rig which is capable of horizontal movement, being mounted on wheels or castors

2.21 Ropes**2.21.1****minimum breaking load of ropes**

the minimum value which shall be reached in a tensile test to destruction

2.21.2**by-pass rope**

short ropes fixed in parallel with another part of the suspension gear (for instance from a platform to a safety device), to come into operation in the event of a failure of that part.

2.21.3**safety or secondary rope**

rope(s) not normally carrying the weight of the working platform and the imposed load thereon but rigged in conjunction with a safety device to come into operation in the event of a failure of the suspension rope(s).

2.21.4**suspension rope**

the ropes carrying the weight of the working platform and the imposed load thereon

2.21.5**traversing rope**

ropes rigged for the purpose of traversing the platform and not carrying the weight of it

2.22**factor of safety against overturning**

the coefficient by which the maximum overturning moment of the working platform is multiplied to ensure safety against overturning, being the ratio of the sum of the righting moments to the maximum overturning moment.

2.23**safety gear**

a device or devices acting on a separate safety rope, which will arrest and sustain a cradle in the event of the failure of a suspension rope.

2.24**single and double wire rope suspensions**

a single wire rope suspension system is one which has one suspension rope at each end of an independent platform or cradle or at each end and hinge of a continuous platform

a double wire rope suspension system is one which has two ropes at these locations

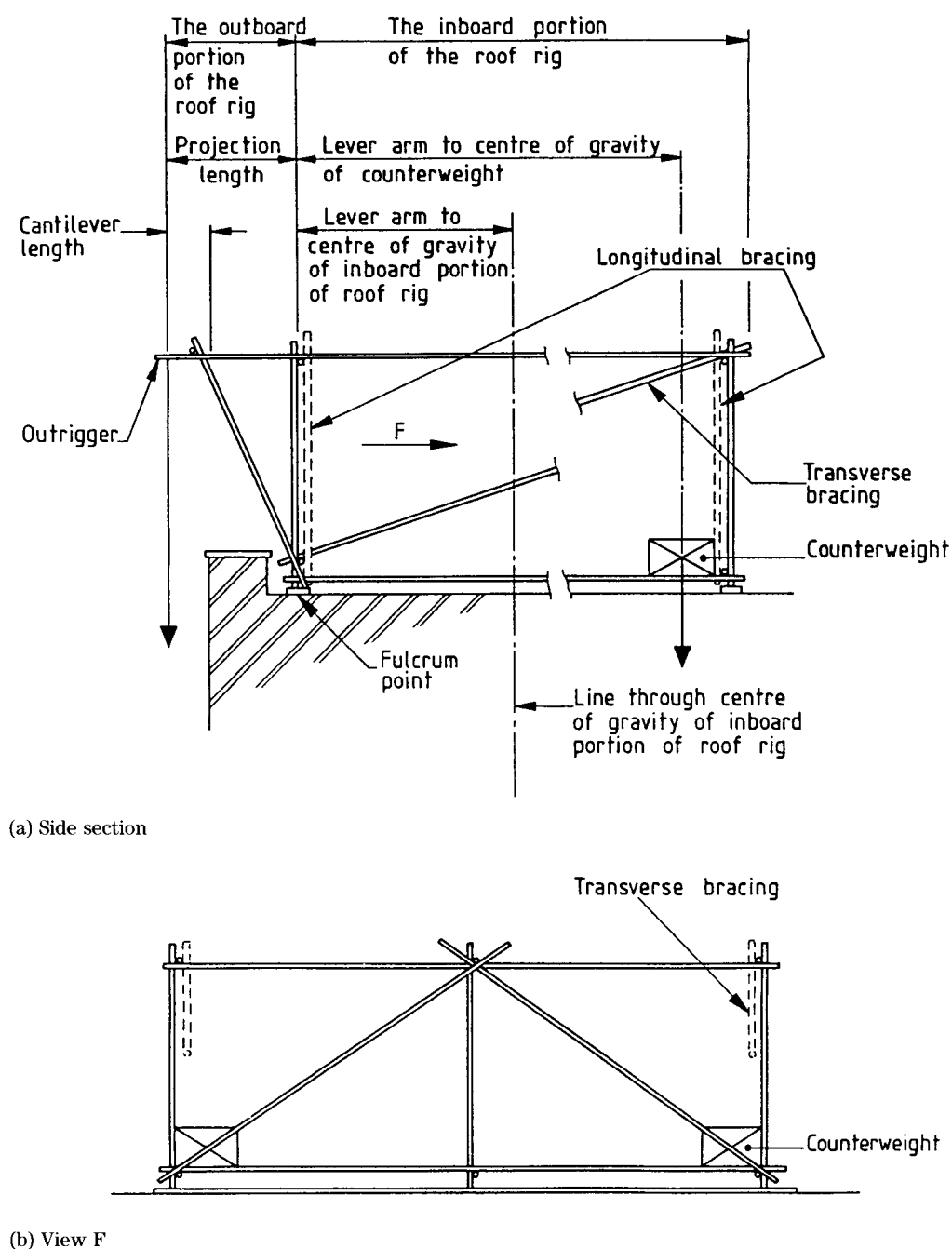


Figure 1 — Examples of roof rig definitions

2.25**stop end or quadrant**

the attachment at or near the end of a rail or track or at an intermediate point to prevent further traversing of the platform

2.26 suspended safety chair

a bosun's chair, or similar appliance suitable for one man to use

2.27 Suspension gear

The assembly of lifting appliances and gear which joins the working platform to the roof rig.

2.27.1**jockey block**

a wheeled block for suspending a cradle below a track and incorporating a pulley for the suspension system (see Figure 2)

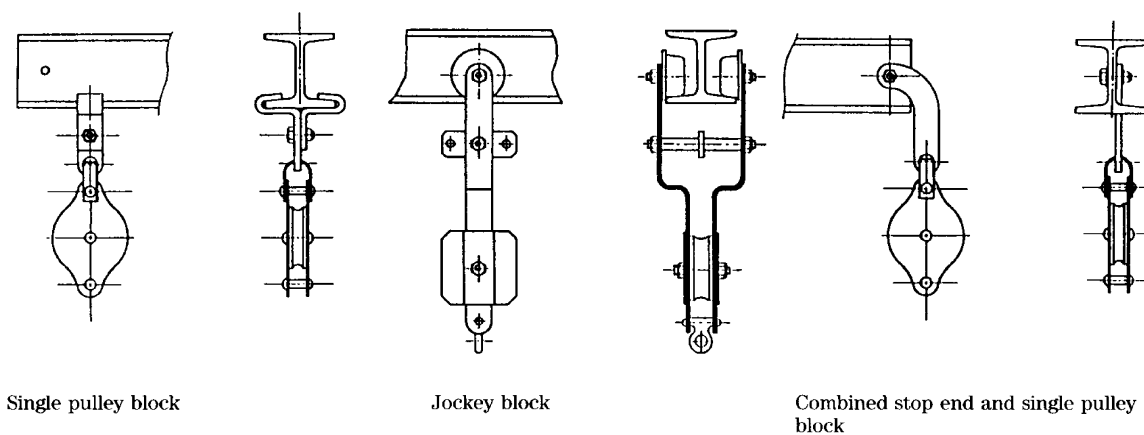
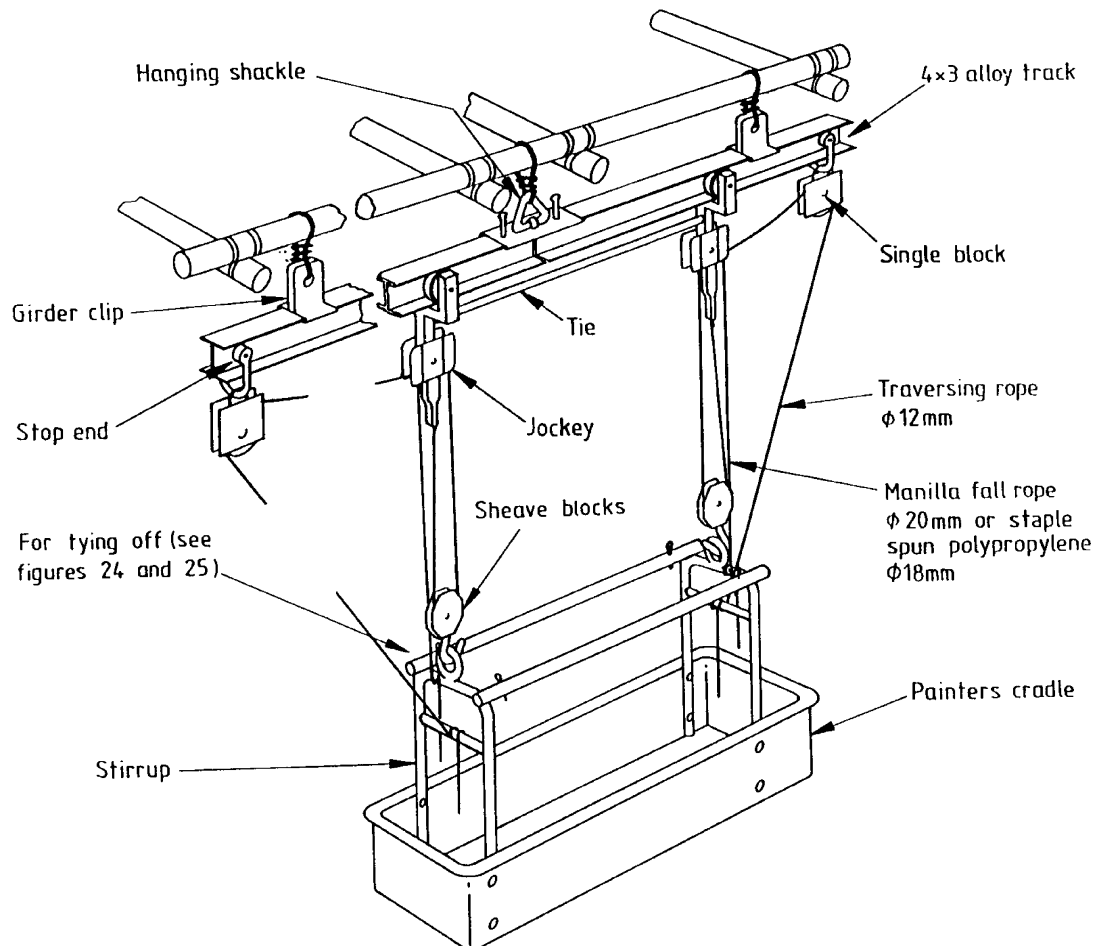
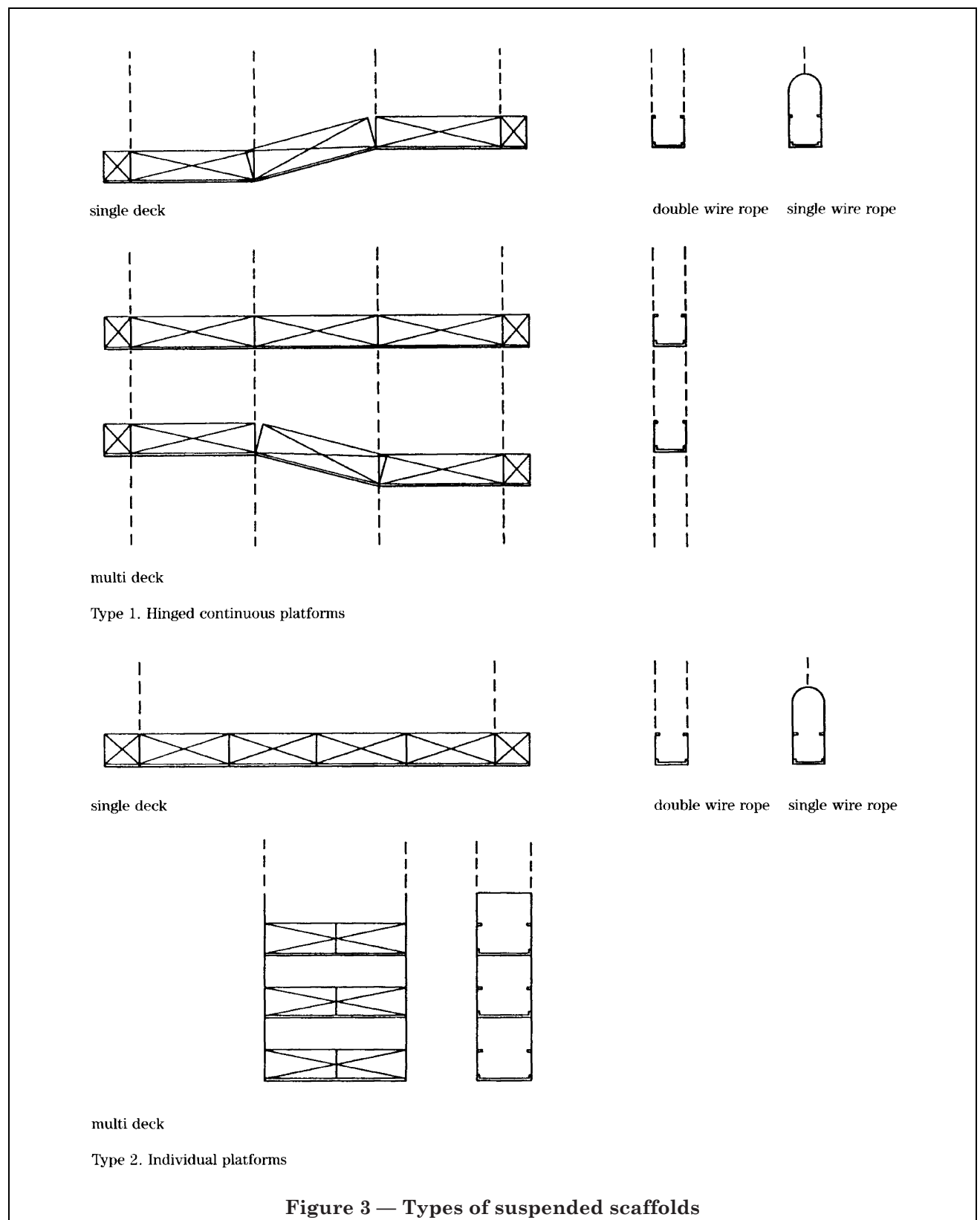
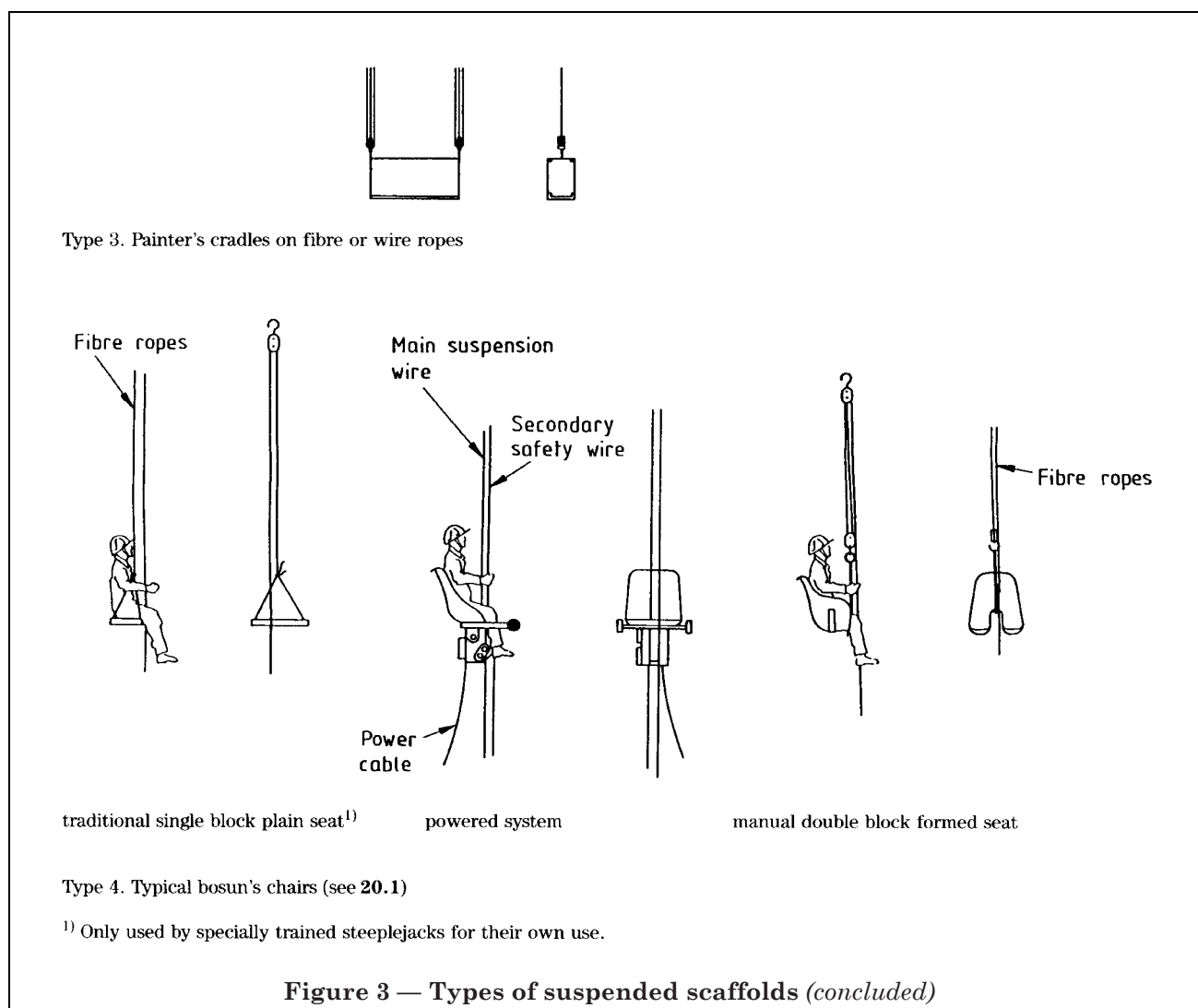


Figure 2 — Typical travelling cradle arrangement





2.28 track

the rail or rails normally installed at roof level which support and guide jockey blocks or a mobile roof-rig

2.29 user

any person, firm or organization using the suspended scaffold or access equipment

2.30 Winch

A lifting appliance manually or power operated to raise and lower the working platform by means of a suspension rope reeled on to a drum.

2.30.1 platform mounted or cradle mounted winch

a winch which is mounted on the platform or cradle with the free end of the rope attached to the roof rig

2.30.2 roof mounted winch

a winch which is mounted on the roof or roof trolley with the free end of the rope attached to the working platform

2.31 Working platform

(See cradle 2.6).

2.31.1 fixed working platform

a working platform which does not traverse horizontally except by movement of a roof rig but which is capable of being raised and lowered

2.31.2 hinged continuous working platform

a working platform of several sections hinged together enabling operatives to walk from one section to another

2.31.3**individual working platform**

a separate platform used by itself (see Figure 3 type 2)

2.31.4**one man working platform**

a short length of individual platform or a work cage

2.31.5**travelling or traversing working platform**

a working platform capable of being moved horizontally

2.32**work cage**

a working platform which is suspended from a single wire rope, for use by up to two persons

2.33**aerial transfer**

the changing or the repositioning of suspension ropes whilst the cradle remains suspended

Type 2. Individual platforms. These may have a single deck or several below one another. Each end may be suspended by either one or two wire ropes.

Type 3. "Painter's" cradles. These may be suspended on a fibre rope at each end passing through blocks if the length of the cradle is less than 3.2 m or on one wire rope at each end if the length is greater.

Type 4. Suspended safety chairs (bosun's chairs). These may be suspended by a single fibre rope passing through blocks or on a wire rope when a mechanical lifting appliance is used.

All four types may be manually or power operated. When power operated, types 1, 2 and 3 may have the lifting appliance mounted on either the roof or the platform. Type 4 is not customarily used with a roof mounted winch. Types 2 and 3 may be designed to be traversed horizontally.

Types 1 and 2 may be mounted below the soffits of bridges or from special structures on the parapets of the bridge.

All four types are installations to which the Health and Safety at Work etc., Act 1974 and the Construction Regulations may apply.

NOTE For suspended scaffold structures intended for use in shipyards, reference should be made to the Shipbuilding and Ship-repairing Regulations, 1960 and other appropriate regulations.

Special safety precautions are required for scaffolds suspended from wire ropes used in the construction of metal structures where electric arc welding and cutting is employed.

3 Description**3.1 Systems of attachment to structure**

Suspended scaffolds and access equipment can be subdivided into two classes according to the means of attachment to the building:

- a) those which rely on counterweights for their stability;
- b) those which are structurally attached to the roof or top part of the building or structure.

Either type may be fixed or traversing. The two methods of attachment may occasionally be combined.

3.2 Suspension system

A further subdivision of the types is between those having roof mounted winches and those having platform mounted winches or climbing devices.

Two types of lifting appliance are in common use:

- a) winches, which reel the wire rope on to a drum;
- b) devices which "climb" up the wire rope leaving the tail end of the rope hanging or reeled below the machine.

3.3 Types of platform

Four main types of platform are considered in this code and shown in Figure 2 (See also section 4).

Type 1. Hinged continuous platforms. The working area may be a single deck or several decks beneath each other. There may be either one or two ropes at each end and at each hinge.

4 Statutory requirements

Attention is directed to Acts, Byelaws, Regulations and any other statutory requirements relating to matters dealt with in this code. The equipment should comply with these regulations and requirements. Its performance, use, inspection, testing and maintenance should also be in accordance with the appropriate regulations. Amongst others, the following statutory requirements, current at the date of publication of this code, relate to suspended scaffolds and access equipment:

- a) Health and Safety at Work etc., Act 1974;
- b) Factories Act 1961;
- c) The Electricity (Factories Act) Special Regulations 1908 and 1944;
- d) SI 94 Construction (Working Places) Regulations 1966;

- e) SI 1580 Construction (General Provisions) Regulations 1961;
- f) SI 1581 Construction (Lifting Operations) Regulations 1961.

5 Identification and registration of components and marking of safe working loads

For the purpose of this code every lifting appliance, and each piece of lifting gear, should have plainly marked on it an identification number and its safe working load.

The components referred to in this section should be registered and the tests and inspections carried out thereon recorded as required by the relevant regulations (see clause 4).

Counterweights should preferably be marked with their mass, in kg.

The platform when ready for use should also be marked in easily readable letters at least 100 mm high, with the following:

- a) the safe working load in kilograms;
- b) the maximum number of persons (excluding materials) allowed to be on the platform or on any given length of it.
- c) a clearly legible reminder to check the installation at the beginning of each work period.

6 Materials and components

6.1 General

All materials and components used in the construction and assembly of suspended access equipment should satisfy the requirements of the relevant British Standards and codes of practice where they exist. Where these do not exist the materials should be of sound construction and adequate for the purpose for which they are intended.

The materials and components and their method of assembly should comply with the relevant statutory regulations. A list of British Standards which give details of materials and components which will satisfy the recommendations of this code is given in Appendix A.

All parts of the equipment should be capable of being re-used and re-erected in a safe manner.

6.2 Scaffold tubes and fittings

6.2.1 Steel

Steel scaffold tubes and scaffold fittings should have been manufactured in compliance with BS 1139.

The tubes and fittings should be free from flaws or splits or other defects and the ends of the tubes should be cut cleanly and square with the axis of the tube.

Effective protection against rust staining of the building (such as the use of plastics caps), when this is of consequence, may be applied to the tube.

6.2.2 Aluminium

Aluminium scaffold tube may be used in roof rigs and platforms provided due account is taken in the calculations of its lesser weight and greater deflection under load than steel tube. Aluminium tube should not be mixed with steel tube in the same roof rig owing to the difference in its weight and deflection under load.

Aluminium tube and other aluminium sections may be used in the working platform.

Aluminium scaffold tubes and scaffold fittings should have been manufactured in compliance with BS 1139.

The tubes and fittings should be free from flaws or splits or other defects and the ends of the tubes should be cut cleanly and square with the axis of the tube.

Only fittings suitable for aluminium tube should be used thereon.

6.3 Timber poles

Timber poles used in roof rigs and outriggers should be of Norway spruce or Douglas fir or other timber with equivalent performance characteristics and should be carefully selected for the purpose. They should be sound and free from defects and any signs of deterioration, and should be free of bark and unpainted.

Lengths of up to 7.6 m are commonly used and these should be not less than 65 mm diameter at the "top" or thin end, and approximately 115 mm diameter at the "butt", "bottom" or thick end.

6.4 Lashings

Lashings should have no significant defects and be of steel wire rope of not less than 6 mm diameter. They may be formed with a thimble eye at one end with the other suitably terminated to prevent unlaying.

6.5 Steel wire ropes

Wire suspension and safety ropes of 8 mm diameter and above, where used with winches, should comply with BS 302-2. Wire suspension and safety ropes of less than 8 mm diameter, but of adequate strength where used with winches, should comply with the testing and interpretation requirements of BS 302.

Wire ropes used for climbing devices other than winches should preferably comply with BS 302-2, but, where a special size or form of construction is required by the manufacturer of the device, such a rope should be of good quality and should be replaced, when damaged, only by ropes of the same type.

Wire ropes should be free from significant defects arising from previous use or other cause.

Wire suspension ropes should have an identification and the safe working load marked thereon and be subject to inspection and registration in accordance with the appropriate regulations.

6.6 Fibre ropes

6.6.1 Natural fibre ropes

Natural fibre ropes should comply with BS 2052, grade 1 special quality manila or equivalent. Traversing ropes may be of sisal.

Natural fibre suspension ropes or safety ropes should not be less than 18 mm diameter. They should be free from serious defects arising from previous use or other cause.

Natural fibre ropes should not be used where they will be subject to attack by aggressive chemicals. Instead man-made fibre ropes constructed of materials resistant to the chemicals being used should be utilized. Advice should be obtained from the cordage supplier.

Hot gases from blow lamps and similar heat sources may cause fibre embrittlement in natural fibre cordage exposed to them, and this should be borne in mind when selecting ropes.

6.6.2 Man-made fibre ropes

Appropriate man-made fibre ropes are recommended for use where aggressive chemicals are in use. Advice should be obtained from the cordage supplier. Such ropes should comply with appropriate British Standards and should be of the same size as natural fibre ropes recommended in 6.6.1 and of a similar texture to provide adequate grip when either wet or dry (only a limited number of man-made fibre ropes possess this characteristic and they are related to BS 4928). If ropes are coloured for identification, care should be taken to ensure that the strength of the rope is not impaired. Man-made fibre ropes have a lower fire performance than natural fibre ropes (but see 6.6.1) and special care should be exercised where such ropes are being used by operators working with blow lamps or burners or other heat sources, including lighting.

6.6.3 jointing

Fibre ropes for suspension should be in one continuous length and free from joints.

6.6.4 Marking and inspection Fibre ropes should have an identification and the safe working load marked thereon and be subject to inspection and registration in accordance with the appropriate regulations.

6.7 Traversing track

Traversing track should be constructed of material complying with BS 4360 or BS 1474.

6.8 Other materials

Other materials should comply with the appropriate British Standards. Where there is no British Standard special attention should be given to the quality and strength and durability of the materials.

6.9 Lifting gear, appliances and devices

Lifting gear, appliances and devices should be of good construction and in working order and properly maintained and be subjected to inspection, testing and registration in accordance with the appropriate regulations.

6.10 Counterweights

Counterweights may be of any suitable material capable of being fixed to the inboard end of the roof rig in a manner which does not permit displacement. 25 kg weights with handles or rings for attachment are recommended.

Materials which may be subject to deterioration or easily damaged, such as sand bags, should not be used.

6.11 Proprietary components and equipment

Proprietary equipment should be of good and sound construction and suitable for repeated use for the purpose and period for which it is intended. Its characteristics should be adequately described in data sheets.

6.12 Factors of safety

NOTE See 7.8 for factors of safety against overturning of a roof rig.

6.12.1 General

All components of both the roof rig and the suspended platform should be designed with the factors of safety normally applied to those individual components.

6.12.2 Steel

Steel work should be designed with a factor of safety in accordance with the requirements of BS 449.

6.12.3 Aluminium

aluminium components should be designed with the factor of safety in accordance with the recommendations of BS 8118.²⁾

6.12.4 Timber

Timber should be used in accordance with the recommendations of BS 5268-2 according to the grade of materials used in the structure, except that timber poles, used as outriggers, should be used in accordance with **B.2** of this code.

6.12.5 Scaffold couplers

Scaffold couplers should be used at a factor of safety of not less than 2 or otherwise in accordance with the recommendations of **B.7**.

6.12.6 Ropes

Each suspension and safety rope should have a factor of safety of not less than 8, based on the maximum rope tension when related to the minimum breaking load of the rope, or such other higher factor as specified by the manufacturer of the winch or climbing device.

Where a rope does not have to pass through a lifting or climbing device, a winch, or over a pulley, and does not form part of the means of suspension of the working platform, it may be used at a factor of safety of 3. Examples of such ropes are:

- guys to rigid fixing points for stability;
- cross wire ties in frames;
- traversing ropes;
- tying in wires.

Tie back wires carrying any part or component of the vertical maximum suspended load on the outriggers should have a factor of safety of not less than 6.

6.12.7 Lifting devices and winches

The factor of safety against collapse of lifting devices and winches should be not less than 6 or whatever greater value is specified by the manufacturer, based on the statically loaded condition.

6.13 Weights and strengths of materials and components

Appendix B provides some data on the strength and weights of materials and components.

7 Design

7.1 Structural design of the equipment

The structural design of the platform, the suspension points and the members of the suspension systems should be based on the rope tensions and load outputs of the suspension systems, taking into account the load output of any pulley system used in the suspension system (see **13.9.1**).

The roof rig should be designed so that the permissible stresses appropriate to the material(s) of construction are not exceeded when the maximum total suspended load (see **7.5**) is applied to the suspension point. In addition, the design should ensure that the minimum yield stress of the materials used is not exceeded when the maximum rope tension is developed as a result of the operation of slipping clutches, load limiting devices, stalling torques, etc.

7.2 Design checks

All temporary rigs should be erected to either standard design solutions or to drawings or sketches prepared from special designs. Under all circumstances the tie down force/counterweights and the safe working load (SWL) in the cradle should be indicated. The loads imposed on the building/structure should also be indicated. All drawings, sketches and designs, whether specially prepared or standard detail, should be checked and signed by a competent person other than the person who originally prepared them before the design is put into use.

7.3 Grouping of the loads at one end of a platform or bay

In the case of an individual platform with the suspension points at the ends the design of all parts of the installation should take account of the possible grouping of the persons using the platform at one end of the platform either adjacent to a point of suspension or centred outside this point when cantilevered end extensions are fitted.

Consideration should be given to ensuring the balance of the platform when one cantilevered end is loaded by applying an adequate factor of safety against overturning of the platform, based on the safe working load.

In the case of a hinged continuous platform the load applied to the suspension system at the hinge between two bays should be calculated from the safe working loads of both adjacent bays added together on the assumption that they have accumulated beneath the suspension system supporting the hinge between the bays.

²⁾ In preparation. Revision of CP 118.