

Guidance

G3187

Selection and assessment of work at height equipment

Issue no.:	A1	Issue date:	June 2015
		Review date:	June 2018

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1 Purpose

The purpose of this guidance is to provide general advice to managers and supervisors involved in working at height activities.

2 Scope

This Guidance applies to London Underground (LU) staff working in the Chief Operating Officer's (COO) Directorate.

3 Introduction

Work at height is defined in the Work at Height regulations as any height from which if a person fell from, they could be injured, even if it is at or below ground level. London Underground has a legal duty to ensure that the risks from work at height activities to its employees and others such as contractors are adequately controlled.

There is a hierarchy of control measures that should be used to reduce the risk of injury from work at height activities. These are:

- Avoid the need to work at height, for example by using extending equipment from the ground
- Prevent falls using appropriate access equipment such as work platforms, rope access or ladders
- Reduce the distance and consequences of a fall should one occur

The control measures adopted will be dependent on the results of the Work at Height risk assessment.

3.1 Risk Assessment

Prior to the commencement of any work at height activity a risk assessment should be carried out. The risk assessment should be completed by a competent person, who has sufficient knowledge, training and experience of the work at height activity.

The risk assessment will identify:

- The hazards
- The risks
- The control measures required to minimise the risk of injury from the work at height activity such as training and experience of staff, maintenance of work equipment

All working at height work must be planned and fully risk assessed. Where an activity is unplanned a risk assessment must still be undertaken and documented on site and the equipment selected fully justified. A local site risk assessment must be carried out before any person works at height.

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Appendix 1 summarises the four step Work at Height risk assessment process.

Appendix 2 shows the work at height control measure hierarchy flowchart and provides details of exceptional circumstances when use of certain types of work at height equipment may not be appropriate.

3.2 Selection of work at height equipment

All Working at Height equipment must conform to all relevant BS EN standards or Technical Standards and be formally assessed by a competent person to ensure it is suitable for its intended purpose and environment.

Details of approved LU COO Working at Height equipment are stored as appropriate on the asset management databases Ellipse and Maximo and Scaffold register.

Prior to use, all equipment to be used for work at height should be inspected by a competent person who has been trained in the use of the equipment and identification of common defects. Where applicable, equipment should also be checked to ensure it is within statutory examination periods.

Any equipment that is identified to be defective should be immediately removed and labelled not fit for use.

Damaged work equipment may be repaired, but it must be inspected by a suitably competent person, prior to use. Details of destruction, repairs or maintenance shall be recorded in the appropriate asset management database (Ellipse or Maximo).

Statutory examination inspections should be carried out by competent equipment inspectors.

Equipment involved in an incident will be taken out of service immediately, labelled not fit for use and securely held until such time as it is not further required as part of any investigation, when it will be destroyed.

Details of statutory examinations and pre-use inspections for work at height equipment are provided in the Appendix 3.

3.2.1 Third party work equipment

Third party work equipment should only be provided by a supplier approved through the LU procurement process. The equipment will be subject to the same maintenance and withdrawal requirements as LU, with any equipment requiring withdrawal or disposal returned to the providing Supplier.