



Risk assessment and method statement

Working at height risk assessment

Work at height from ladders, towers and MEWPs. Pre-filled with typical hazards, controls and sequence: edit it for this site.

PROJECT

SITE ADDRESS			
ACTIVITY		RAMS REFERENCE	
Work at height from ladders, towers and MEWPs			
CONTRACTOR CARRYING OUT THE WORK		PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR	
PREPARED BY	APPROVED BY	REVISION	DATE

Revision record

Reissue and rebrief when the sequence, the programme, the team or the conditions change. If you would have written it differently had you known, it needs a new revision.

REV	DATE	WHAT CHANGED	BY

THE WORK

The activity, the place and the people

Pre-filled for this kind of work. Make every line specific to this site: this sequence, this access, these people, this weather.

Scope of the activity

What is being done, and what is not included.

MHSWR REGULATION 3(1)

Work at height to [describe the task] at [location], at a working height of up to [x] metres, for about [duration]. Access by the equipment recorded on the equipment selection page. Not included: erecting tube and fitting scaffold, which is covered by the scaffolding contractor's RAMS.

Location and access

Where on site, how people and materials get there, and the restrictions.

Site access via [gate]. Access equipment delivered to [area] and set up on [ground or floor type], checked for level, voids and load. Exclusion zone below the work, barriered and signed. Working hours [08:00 to 17:00].

Programme and interfaces

When the work runs, and who else is working nearby.

CDM REGULATION 15(2)

START DATE

DURATION

WORKING HOURS

INTERFACES WITH OTHER TRADES

Other trades working below or beside the access equipment: [trades]. They stay outside the exclusion zone while work is under way. Nobody alters a tower, edge protection or MEWP set-up except the team named here.

Documents this RAMS relies on

Equipment selection page; tower instruction manual; MEWP thorough examination report and familiarisation record; ladder inspection record; rescue method; construction phase plan; drawings of edges, openings and fragile surfaces.

The team, and their competence

CDM REGULATION 8

ROLE	NAME	CARD, TICKET OR TRAINING NEEDED	CONTACT
Planner and supervisor		Competent to plan and supervise work at height, as regulation 5 requires; trainees supervised.	
Ladder users		Trained in the pre-use check and safe use set out in LA455.	
Tower erectors		PASMA training for the type of tower being built.	
MEWP operators		Recognised training card for the MEWP category, such as IPAF's, plus familiarisation on the model.	
Harness users		Trained in fitting, checking and using a harness and lanyard, and in the rescue method.	
Ground rescue		Nominated people trained to lower the MEWP platform using the ground controls.	

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METHOD STATEMENT

The sequence of work

The order the team will work in on the day, with the controls built into each stage. If the sequence changes on site, revise the RAMS and brief it again.

STAGE	WHAT IS DONE, AND HOW	CONTROLS AT THIS STAGE	BY
Before the day	Survey the task: working height, duration, ground, edges, openings, fragile surfaces, overhead lines and public routes. Ask first whether the work can be done from the ground.	Equipment chosen by the hierarchy and recorded on the selection page; rescue method written.	Supervisor
Book the right equipment	Order the tower, MEWP or edge protection that the selection page calls for, with its manual. Check MEWP thorough examination reports and the operators' training cards.	Thorough examination in date; operators familiarised with the model; tower manual on site.	Supervisor
Arrival and briefing	Sign in, attend the site induction, then brief the team on this assessment, the exclusion zone, the weather limits and the rescue method.	Briefing signed against this revision; training cards checked.	Supervisor
Check the ground and set out	Check the ground or floor where the equipment will stand for level, voids, covers and soft spots. Barrier and sign the zone below the work.	Spreader plates under outriggers where needed; public routes kept open or diverted.	Operatives
Pre-use checks	Check ladders, harnesses and lanyards before use. Carry out the MEWP's daily function check and confirm the ground controls work.	Defective kit tagged and taken out of use; MEWP checks recorded.	Each user
Erect or set up access	Build the tower to the manual using the advance guard-rail or through-the-trap method. Set up edge protection or the MEWP as planned.	Guard-rails complete before the platform is used; inspection after assembly recorded.	Tower erector
Work at height	Carry out the task from the platform with tools on lanyards and materials kept off the guard-rails. Keep the exclusion zone in place throughout.	Harness on a short restraint lanyard in a boom MEWP; nobody works alone at height.	Operatives
Changes and bad weather	Stop work if the wind passes the limit, the weather turns or the task changes. Re-inspect towers and edge protection after anything that could affect them.	Platforms inspected at least every 7 days and after bad weather; assessment revised if the method changes.	Supervisor
Dismantle and clear	Lower the MEWP or strip the tower in the reverse order of the manual, lowering components by hand. Remove barriers once the last item is down.	Nothing thrown; exclusion zone kept until the area is clear and handed back.	Operatives

CDM REGULATION 15(2): PLAN, MANAGE AND MONITOR THE WORK

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RISK ASSESSMENT

Hazards, controls and the risk that remains

Each significant hazard rated before and after its controls, as likelihood times severity. The ratings are typical: check them for this site.

	LIKELIHOOD		SEVERITY		
	1	2	3	4	5
5	5	10	15	20	25
4	4	8	12	16	20
3	3	6	9	12	15
2	2	4	6	8	10
1	1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	3	4	5

1 to 4 low
 5 to 12 medium
 15 to 25 high

HAZARD	WHO COULD BE HARMED, AND HOW	RISK BEFORE	CONTROLS	RISK AFTER	BY
Falls from leaning ladders	Anyone using a leaning ladder for access or a short task.	4 x 4 = 16 High	- Ladder used only where the assessment shows low risk and short duration; as a guide, not more than 30 minutes at a time. - Pre-use check by the user each day; ladder secured where reasonably practicable and set at 75 degrees, one out for every four up. - Three points of contact when climbing, belt buckle kept within the stiles, and no work off the top three rungs.	2 x 4 = 8 Med	Supervisor
Falls from stepladders	Operatives working from stepladders on short, light tasks.	4 x 3 = 12 Med	- All four feet on firm, level ground, locking bars fully engaged, and the steps facing the work where possible. - No standing on the top three steps unless there is a suitable handhold. - Two feet and one hand at the work position, or two feet and the body supported by the steps for brief two-handed work.	2 x 3 = 6 Med	
Falls from mobile access towers	Erectors and users, through incomplete guard-rails or while building the tower.	3 x 5 = 15 High	- Erected by PASMA-trained people to the manufacturer's instruction manual, using the advance guard-rail or through-the-trap method. - Full guard-rails and toe boards on the working platform before work starts; access by the built-in ladder only. - Inspected after assembly and, where a fall of 2m or more is possible on construction work, at least every 7 days.	1 x 5 = 5 Med	Tower erector
Tower overturning or collapse	Tower users and anyone below, from missing parts, poor ground or moving it loaded.	3 x 5 = 15 High	- Stabilisers or outriggers fitted where the manual requires; castors locked; ground firm and level. - Every component in place; no ladders or boxes on the platform to gain height. - Never moved with people or materials on it, or in windy conditions.	1 x 5 = 5 Med	
Falls from a MEWP platform	People in the basket of a boom-type MEWP thrown out by a jolt, a swing or an impact.	3 x 5 = 15 High	- Operators hold a recognised training card listing the MEWP categories, such as IPAF's, and are familiarised with the model. - In a boom-type MEWP, a full harness on a short work restraint lanyard clipped to the basket's anchor point. - No standing on the guard-rails, no balancing materials on them, and no leaving the basket at height.	1 x 5 = 5 Med	MEWP operator
Trapping in a MEWP against a structure	MEWP operators working close to beams, ducts, soffits and other overhead obstructions.	3 x 5 = 15 High	- Route and work position checked for overhead and adjacent structures before the platform is raised. - A MEWP with a secondary guarding device chosen where trapping is possible; extra training for confined overhead work. - Trained person at ground level who can lower the platform with the ground controls.	1 x 5 = 5 Med	
MEWP overturning	Operators and people nearby, from soft ground, slopes, overloading or wind.	2 x 5 = 10 Med	- Ground checked for voids, covers and soft spots; outriggers on spreader plates where the machine has them. - Safe working load includes people, tools and materials; the overload system is never disabled. - Wind speed checked against the machine's rating; indoor-only machines kept indoors.	1 x 5 = 5 Med	
Falls from open edges and flat roofs	Anyone working near roof edges, slab edges, stair voids or lift shafts.	3 x 5 = 15 High	- Edge protection with a main guard-rail at least 950mm high, an intermediate rail leaving no gap over 470mm, and toe boards. - Edges protected before work starts; nobody removes a rail without a supervisor's say and a replacement control. - Roof work planned with the roofing RAMS where the job is on a roof.	1 x 5 = 5 Med	Supervisor

MHSWR REGULATION 3(6): WITH FIVE OR MORE EMPLOYEES, RECORD THE SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

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RISK ASSESSMENT, CONTINUED

More hazards, and those specific to this site

HAZARD	WHO COULD BE HARMED, AND HOW	RISK BEFORE	CONTROLS	RISK AFTER	BY
Falls through fragile surfaces	Anyone crossing or working near fragile roof sheets, rooflights or roof glazing.	3 x 5 = 15 High	• Work done without going on or near the fragile surface wherever reasonably practicable. • Where it cannot be avoided, platforms, covers or guard-rails that take the load, then nets to minimise any fall. • Prominent warning notices at the approach to every fragile surface.	1 x 5 = 5 Med	
Falls into openings and excavations	Operatives and others near floor openings, risers, manholes and trenches.	3 x 4 = 12 Med	• Openings covered with fixed, marked covers that take the load, or guarded with rails. • Excavation edges barriered, with a safe crossing point where people need to cross.	1 x 4 = 4 Low	
Falling tools and materials	People below the work, including other trades and the public.	4 x 4 = 16 High	• Exclusion zone below the work, barriered and signed. • Tools on lanyards at height; toe boards and brick guards where materials are stacked. • Nothing thrown or tipped from height; materials lowered by hand, hoist or chute.	2 x 4 = 8 Med	
Overhead power lines	Anyone handling ladders, tower sections or MEWP booms near overhead lines.	2 x 5 = 10 Med	• Lines identified before work; network operator contacted to make dead or divert where work is close. • No ladder work within 6m horizontally of an overhead line unless it is dead or protected with insulation. • Non-conductive ladders for electrical work.	1 x 5 = 5 Med	
Weather: wind, rain and ice	Anyone working on exposed platforms, towers, MEWPs and roofs.	3 x 4 = 12 Med	• Forecast checked each morning; work stopped when weather puts health or safety at risk. • Wind limits from the tower manual and the MEWP's rating written on the briefing. • Platforms, rungs and steps checked for ice, water and mud before use.	2 x 4 = 8 Med	
Suspension after a fall arrest	A person left hanging in a harness after a fall.	2 x 5 = 10 Med	• Written rescue method for each place a harness is used, with the kit on site and the team practised in it. • Never working alone at height; rescue started at once, without waiting for the emergency services. • Casualty given first aid once down, and the emergency services called.	1 x 5 = 5 Med	Supervisor

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EQUIPMENT

Plant, equipment and PPE

Plant and equipment

Each item, the checks and certificates it needs, and who may operate it.

PUWER 1998, LOLER 1998

ITEM	CHECKS AND CERTIFICATES	OPERATOR COMPETENCE
Leaning ladders and stepladders	To BS EN 131; pre-use check each day; detailed visual inspections recorded.	Trained user
Mobile access tower	Built to the manual; inspected after assembly and every 7 days.	PASMA trained
Mobile elevating work platform	Daily function check; thorough examination at least every 6 months.	Trained, familiarised
Harness and lanyard	Pre-use check each day; detailed inspections recorded.	Trained user
Temporary edge protection	Inspected after installation and after anything that affects it.	Competent installer
Rescue kit	On site, checked before work and suited to the access used.	Trained rescuer

Personal protective equipment

PPE is the last line of defence, after the controls above. Specify the type, not just the item.

PPE AT WORK REGULATIONS 1992

ITEM	NEEDED	TYPE AND SPECIFICATION
Safety helmet	☒	Helmet with chin strap at height
Safety footwear	☒	Safety boots, grip sole, ankle support
High-visibility clothing	☒	To site standard
Gloves	☒	Grip gloves for handling components
Eye protection	☐	
Hearing protection	☐	
Respiratory protection Type, and face-fit tested	☐	
Harness or restraint Anchor points identified	☒	Full harness, short lanyard in a boom MEWP

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CONTROLS

Substances, permits, emergencies and the environment

Hazardous substances

Each substance and its COSHH assessment.

COSHH 2002, REGULATION 6

SUBSTANCE	COSHH ASSESSMENT REFERENCE	CONTROLS

Permits and plans

PERMIT OR PLAN	NEEDED	REFERENCE
Hot work permit	☐	
Permit to work	☒	
Permit to dig or break ground	☐	
Confined space entry	☐	
Lift plan	☒	
Temporary works design	☐	

Emergency and rescue

First aid, fire, and how someone is rescued.
The rescue plan belongs in the RAMS, not
after it.

A written rescue method for each type of access before work starts. That means trained people on the MEWP ground controls, and kit and a method to reach anyone in a harness. Rescue starts at once, without waiting for the emergency services. First aider on site and the nearest accident and emergency department named on the briefing.

Environment and neighbours

Dust, noise, vibration, waste, spills and hours
of work.

Ground protection under MEWP outriggers on finished surfaces. Work stopped when wind passes the limit in the tower manual or the MEWP's rating. Packaging and offcuts brought down and removed from site. Public routes kept open or diverted.

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EQUIPMENT SELECTION

Equipment selection by the hierarchy

For each task, record whether it can be done from the ground, then the equipment chosen and why. Collective protection comes before personal protection, and a ladder only for low risk, short tasks.

TASK AND LOCATION	CAN IT BE DONE FROM THE GROUND?	EQUIPMENT CHOSEN	WHY, BY THE HIERARCHY	FALL PROTECTION	RESCUE METHOD
Replace light fittings, ground floor corridor, 3.5m	No: fittings are fixed at ceiling height	Low-level mobile access tower	Prevent: guard-railed platform. Task takes over 30 minutes, so a ladder is not justified	Guard-rails and toe boards on the platform	Climb down by the built-in ladder; first aider on site
Clear gutters, two-storey building	Partly: reach tools from the ground for most runs	Reach tools, then a boom-type MEWP for the rest	Avoid first; prevent with a MEWP where tools cannot reach	Harness on a short work restraint lanyard	Trained person on site using the ground controls
Inspect a soffit, 4m, ten minutes	No: close inspection needed	Leaning ladder, tied or footed	Low risk and short duration; firm ground and sound wall; a tower is not justified	Three points of contact; ladder secured	Second person present; first aid and emergency call
Install plant on a flat roof	No	Existing roof with temporary edge protection	Prevent: work from an existing place made safe with guard-rails	Guard-rails at 950mm with toe boards; rooflights covered	Rescue kit and trained team on the roof

WORK AT HEIGHT REGULATIONS 2005, REGULATIONS 6 AND 7 AND SCHEDULE 6; LA455; HSE GEIS6

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Briefed before the work starts

BRIEFED BY	REVISION BRIEFED	DATE AND TIME

[illegible]

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