WORKING AT HEIGHT

Mannings Facilities Management Ltd
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The Working at Height Regulations were introduced in 2005 in an attempt to reduce the number of deaths and serious injuries involving work at height every year.

Work at height means work in any place, whether above, at or below ground level. Obtaining access or egress from such a place while at work, except by a stairway in a permanent workplace.

The regulations are concerned with any work area where a fall – if it occurred – would result in personal injury of one or more individuals.

DETAIL

EMPLOYER/EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIP

- The employer is responsible for proper management of the work at height for his employees and any others under his responsibility – including contractors and visitors.

PLANNING OF THE WORK

- The employer is tasked with planning the work, ensuring it is properly supervised and carried out in a safe manner.
- The planning process shall include consideration of emergencies, rescue and take into account management changes due to weather changes.

COMPETENT PERSON

- A suitable level of competence is required for all involved in aspects of the work at height. Suitable and sufficient training with regard to planning, design, exception, activity and subsequent use of the raised platform or area must also be considered.

RISK ASSESSMENT and METHOD STATEMENT

- Under Reg. 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, employers are required to have a suitable risk assessment in place to cover working at height. This may be generic but any activity outside of the core risk assessment must be considered separately – and a specific RA written.

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- A Method Statement may be required – depending on the activity and the hazardous aspect of it. The purpose of the MS is to clarify how the work will be undertaken and ensure risks are controlled in line with the Risk Assessment.

- The hierarchical approach to risk management insist that we avoid working at height when ever practicable.

- If the work at height is unavoidable, we are tasked with taking measures, so far as is reasonably practicable to ensure that a person cannot fall "a distance liable to cause personal injury". This statement is absolute and the requirement quite clear.

SELECTION OF WORK EQUIPMENT

When choosing equipment, employers are tasked with considering:

- The suitability, quantity and quality of the equipment – whether ladder, scaffolding, steps, MEWPS or whatever.
- The location of the equipment – with regard to emergency egress, access etc.
- The distance and consequence of a fall (likelihood + severity = risk)
- The duration and frequency of use
- The maximum load of the elevated platform or structure
- The requirement to stop objects falling from the elevated platform/scaffolding or area.
- Fall arrest systems
- Access via ladders – ladders are tied safely.

FRAGILE SURFACES

- Every employer must make sure that employees are not asked/expected to work near fragile surfaces – roof lights or fragile roofs.

INSPECTION

- Scaffolding, ladders and stepladders or any equipment used in getting employees elevated must be inspected in line with government expectations. Scaffolding must be inspected by the erector and signed over to the client. The client must then inspect to his satisfaction the scaffolding and sign to agree that it is safe for others to work on. Ladders to be checked by user on a daily basis.

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- MFM owned stepladders and ladders are inspected annually by a competent person and a check sticker with 'last use by day' clearly stated is attached.

- Lifting equipment (MEWPS) are covered under the LOLER Regulations and must be inspected regularly. MFM must ensure that contractors using these equipment's have complied with current regulations with regards to compliance checks.

TRAINING

- MFM as employers are to ensure that staff required to work at height receive the correct training and guidance. The training must be suitable and sufficient and the employee will need to sign that he has attended and understood the message of the training.



R A Chamberlain

Managing Director

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