

# Working at Heights Procedure

SAMPLE

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SAMPLE

## Purpose

This Working at Heights Procedure sets out the minimum work health and safety (WHS) requirements for planning, supervising and carrying out work where a person could fall from one level to another that is reasonably likely to cause injury. It applies to all employees, labour hire workers, contractors, subcontractors and visitors engaged by [Company Name] across all worksites, including building and construction sites, roofing projects, painting and decorating works, glazing and window installation, electrical and solar installations, and air conditioning and refrigeration works.

The procedure aims to:

- Eliminate work at height where reasonably practicable.
- Minimise the risk of falls and falling objects where work at height cannot be eliminated.
- Ensure compliance with relevant WHS legislation, codes of practice and Australian Standards.
- Provide clear roles, responsibilities and safe systems of work for all tasks involving work at height.

## Scope

This procedure applies to all tasks performed under the control of [Company Name] where there is a risk of a fall from one level to another that is reasonably likely to cause injury, including but not limited to:

- Work on roofs (pitched, flat, metal, tiled or fragile) for roofing, solar, air conditioning, antenna or skylight installation and maintenance.
- Use of ladders for painting, electrical work, glazing, access to plant, or inspection activities.
- Work from scaffolds, mobile scaffolds and tower scaffolds.
- Work using elevating work platforms (EWPs) such as boom lifts and scissor lifts.
- Work from workboxes, personnel cages or similar suspended equipment.
- Work on incomplete structures, mezzanines, balconies, leading edges and penetrations.
- Work near openings, voids, stairwells, shafts or fragile surfaces.

This procedure applies to all locations where [Company Name] undertakes work, including construction sites, commercial buildings, domestic dwellings, industrial premises and client facilities.

## References

This procedure is to be read in conjunction with, and is based on, the following (as applicable in the relevant State or Territory):

- Work Health and Safety Act
- Work Health and Safety Regulation (including provisions relating to falls, construction work, high risk construction work and plant)
- Safe Work Australia Code of Practice: Managing the Risk of Falls at Workplaces
- Safe Work Australia Code of Practice: Construction Work
- AS/NZS 1891 series – Industrial fall-arrest systems and devices
- AS/NZS 1657 – Fixed platforms, walkways, stairways and ladders
- AS/NZS 4576 – Guidelines for scaffolding
- Manufacturer instructions and technical data for ladders, scaffolds, EWPs, fall arrest systems and roof anchor points
- [Company Name] WHS Policy and related procedures (e.g. Risk Management, Permit to Work, Contractor Management, Incident Reporting, Training and Competency)

## Definitions

For the purpose of this procedure

- **Work at height** – Any work where there is a reasonably likely risk of a fall from one level to another that could cause injury, regardless of the distance.
- **Fall** – A person's unintentional descent by force of gravity, including from a height or into a depth (e.g. into a pit, shaft or void).
- **Fall prevention** – Measures that eliminate the risk of a fall (e.g. working from the ground, use of extension tools, permanent guardrails).
- **Fall protection** – Measures that do not eliminate the risk of a fall but minimise the likelihood or consequences (e.g. work positioning systems, fall arrest systems, safety nets).
- **High risk construction work (HRCW)** – Construction work that involves a risk of a person falling more than 2 metres, as defined in WHS legislation.
- **PCBU** – Person conducting a business or undertaking, being [Company Name] and, where applicable, principal contractors and subcontractors.
- **Officer** – A person who makes or participates in making decisions that affect the whole or a substantial part of [Company Name]'s business.
- **Worker** – Any person who carries out work in any capacity for [Company Name], including employees, contractors, subcontractors, apprentices, trainees, labour hire workers and volunteers.
- **Competent person** – A person who has acquired through training, qualification or experience the knowledge and skills to carry out the task.
- **EWP (Elevating Work Platform)** – A mobile plant device used to position personnel, equipment and materials at height (e.g. scissor lift, boom lift).

- **Scaffold** – A temporary structure used to support a work platform for workers and materials.
- **Fragile surface** – A surface that is not capable of safely supporting a person or load and may collapse or fail (e.g. skylights, fibre cement sheeting, corroded metal sheeting).

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Officers and Senior Management

Officers and senior managers of [Company Name] must exercise due diligence to ensure that [Company Name] complies with its WHS duties relating to work at heights by:

- Ensuring appropriate resources and processes are available and used to eliminate or minimise the risk of falls.
- Ensuring this procedure is implemented, maintained and reviewed.
- Monitoring WHS performance related to work at heights, including incident trends, inspections and audit outcomes.
- Ensuring worker consultation and participation in the development and review of height safety controls.

### Managers and Supervisors

Managers and supervisors are responsible for:

- Planning work so that it can be done safely, including scheduling to avoid unnecessary work at height.
- Ensuring risk assessments, Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS) and permits (where required) are completed and implemented.
- Confirming that only competent and authorised workers use ladders, scaffolds, EWPs and fall arrest systems.
- Verifying that plant and equipment used for work at height is inspected, maintained and fit for purpose.
- Stopping any work at height that is unsafe or not in accordance with this procedure.
- Ensuring appropriate supervision is provided, particularly for new or inexperienced workers.

### Health and Safety Personnel

WHS advisors, coordinators or representatives (as applicable) are responsible for:

- Providing specialist advice on height safety hazards and controls.
- Assisting in the development, review and monitoring of SWMS for work at height.