



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

New Plymouth District Council

Working at Height

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1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this document is to define the requirements to be met for working at height to ensure all work carried out is controlled and clearly documented to ensure people are protected from harm.

2.0 Scope

This procedure applies to all persons working for and on behalf of NPDC i.e. workers, contractors, subcontractors etc. when working at height.

‘Work at Height’ is defined as work performed where there is a potential fall distance of 1.8 metres or more, inclusive of whether it is above or below ground level or within 2.0 metres or less from an unguarded edge.

This procedure must be read in conjunction with the [NPDC Permit to Work Procedure](#).

3.0 References

- [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work \(General Risk and Workplace Management\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [Worksafe Guidelines for height – best practice guidelines for working at height in New Zealand](#)
- [Scaffolding in New Zealand](#)
- [Safe use of safety nets](#)
- [Equipment for working at height](#)
- AS/NZS1891 Industrial fall arrest systems and devices
- National Guidelines for Occupational Health and Safety in the NZ Water Industry Second Edition 2001
- [Worksafe notification of particularly hazardous work](#)

4.0 Definitions

MEWP	Mobile Elevated Work Platform
Work at Height	‘Work at Height’ is defined as work performed where there is a potential fall distance of 1.8 metres or more, inclusive of whether it is above or below ground level or within 2.0 metres or less from an unguarded edge.

5.0 Responsibilities

In addition to the responsibilities listed in the NPDC Permit to Work Procedure, the specific responsibilities in relation to Work at Height are:

Permit Issuer

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- Confirm that the hazards associated with the work at heights have been identified and assessed and that the identified controls are adequate to perform the work in a safe and environmentally sound manner prior to authorising and issuing the permit to work.

Permit Receiver

- Completes a Job Safety & Environmental Analysis (JSEA) that includes practical controls measures before work at height commences.
- Ensures only trained and competent persons perform the work at height
- Ensures all equipment used, complies with relevant code of practice or regulation, be fit for purpose, well maintained and certified where required.

6.0 Training & Competency

Specialised training and competencies are required before an individual is to perform work at height.

These and other training requirements can be found on the [NPDC Training Matrix](#).

PTW Role	Training	Description
Person working at height	NZQA US17600	Explain safe work practices for working at height (minimum expectation)
Planning, installing and operating a harness**	NZQA US25045	Employ height safety equipment in the workplace (only if required in the particular work)
	NZQA US23229	Use of a safety harness for personal fall protection when working at height (only if required in the particular work)
	NZQA US23966	Describes types of elevating work platforms (EWP's) and legislative requirements for their use.
	NZQA US15757	Use, install and disestablish proprietary fall arrest systems.
Scaffold – erecting up to 5m	NZQA US9184	Erect and dismantle non-notifiable prefabricated frame scaffolding up to five metres in height OR
	NZQA US13016	Demonstrate knowledge of the erection and dismantling of scaffolding up to five metres in height OR
	NZQA US13053	Erect and dismantle scaffolding up to five metres in height OR Equivalent training
Scaffold – erecting 5m and above		Hold a current certificate of competence with respect to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic scaffolding, where the scaffolding being erected, maintained, repaired, or dismantled is basic scaffolding; OR - Advanced scaffolding, where the scaffolding being erected, maintained, repaired or dismantled is advanced scaffolding; OR - Suspended scaffolding, where the scaffolding being
Operating an EWP	NZQA US23966	Describe types of elevating work platforms (EWP's) and legislative requirements for their use
	NZQA US23960	Assess the worksite , prepare and operate a scissor lift



	NZQA US23961	Assess the worksite, prepare and operate a truck mounted EWP
	NZQA US23962	Assess the worksite, prepare and operate a self-propelled boom lift
	NZQA US23963	Assess the worksite, prepare and operate a trailer-mounted EWP
	NZQA US23964	Assess the worksite, prepare and operate a vertical lift
Forklift operator using a forklift with platform/safety cage	NZQA US10851 AND NZQA US18409	Operate a powered industrial lift truck AND Use a forklift mounted safety platform in the workplace.
Standby person for working at heights	NZQA US17600 NZQA US 25045 NZQA US 23229 AND	Explain safe work practices for working at height Employ height safety equipment in the workplace (only if required in the particular work) Use of a safety harness for personal fall prevention when working at height (only if required in the particular work) Must be familiar with the rescue plan

***Persons not trained should be inducted by qualified persons before they are permitted to use the system. They should be supervised at all times by someone who is trained and competent as specified above.*

7.0 Requirements for Work at Height

Work at Height shall be managed under the [NPDC PTW System](#)

A Work at height certificate must be used in conjunction with the permit to provide a high level of detail on the controls to be put in place to manage the activity.

Where a fall arrest system is to be used, a rescue plan is mandatory to identify the rescue team and action required in an emergency to help people who have fallen, are suspended in a harness, and could develop suspension trauma.

6.1 ELIMINATE THE RISK

Avoid work at height where possible or make plans so work at height can be eliminated. I.e. can a roof inspection be carried out using a drone to remove the need to work at height?

6.2 ISOLATE THE HAZARD

The preferred approach is to apply group controls that isolate multiple workers from the risk of falling. Controls such as harness systems and temporary work platforms provide a lesser form of protection and should only be considered when group controls are not practicable.

Edge protection and guardrails

Are used to prevent persons, objects and materials from falling. Installed in areas where the likelihood of a fall exists and edge protection is used along perimeters of elevated work spaces.



Refer [Worksafe Guidelines for height – best practice guidelines for working at height in New Zealand](#)

Scaffolding

Should comply with [Worksafes Good Practice Guidelines- Scaffolding in NZ](#). All scaffold should be erected, altered and dismantles by persons who have been trained and have suitable experience with the type of scaffold being used.

Barriers

Should be used to cordon off elevated areas (including open excavations) where edge protection is not provided and people are not permitted access. They should be secure with access restricted to authorised personnel only. Signs should warn against entry to a cordoned-off area.

Barriers should be placed at least 2 metres in from any unprotected edge or opening. They should be highly visible and capable of remaining in place during adverse weather conditions. Refer [Worksafe Guidelines for height – best practice guidelines for working at height in New Zealand](#)

Mobile scaffold

Should be erected, maintained, altered and dismantled by a competent person and used in accordance to the manufactures specifications if less than 5m in height. If more than 5m in height the mobile scaffold needs to be erected by a certified scaffolder of the correct class. Refer to [Worksafes Good Practice Guidelines- Scaffolding in NZ](#).

Mobile elevating work platform (MEWPs)

Power operated elevated work platforms, which include cherry picker, scissor hoists, etc are specialised pieces of equipment. It is essential that the correct type of machine is used for the job and that it is operated in accordance with the operating instructions. The platform must only be operated by trained and competent person. Refer to [Worksafe Guidelines for height – best practice guidelines for working at height in New Zealand](#)

Forklift Safety cage/Platform

When a forklift fitted with a safety cage (or work platform) is to be used to elevate personnel, this should be used in accordance with the [Approved Code of Practice for Training operators and Instructors of Powered Industrial Lift Trucks \(forklifts\)](#).

Platform ladders and Stepladders

Platform ladders and step ladders do not offer fall protection and therefore should be the last form of work access equipment to be considered, however can be used on NPDC sites.

A ladder can be used if the work does not require 2 hands, is of short duration (usually less than 30 mins) and is to carry out a 'light task' for example changing out a light bulb or touching up paint. Refer to [Worksafe Guidelines for height – best practice guidelines for working at height in New Zealand](#)



Total Restraint System

The preferred harness system for working at height is the Total restraint system. Refer to [Worksafe Guidelines for height – best practice guidelines for working at height in New Zealand](#)

6.3 PROTECT THE WORKER (minimise the hazard)

Where it is not possible to eliminate the risk of falling, use a suitable fall protection system to minimise the consequences of a fall.

Fall arrest system

A fall arrest system is designed to support and hold a person in the event of a fall. Only when total restraint is impractical, should a fall arrest system be considered. User is wearing a harness, and secured to a fixed anchor point, via a lanyard which includes a shock absorber system. **A rescue plan is mandatory.** Refer to [Worksafe Guidelines for height – best practice guidelines for working at height in New Zealand](#).

Safety nets

Safety nets should be regularly inspected by a competent person and periodically tested in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The manufacturer's instructions shall also be followed for installation, use and storage.

Other personal protective equipment

- Safety helmets with chin straps must be worn when working at height if there is a risk of being struck by falling objects (e.g. people working in excavations, constructions, working on or under scaffold or when a fall arrest system is used).
- Tool lanyards to prevent dropped objects.
- Closure of the work area below the work at height.

6.4 Rescue Plan

A rescue plan must be prepared before a work permit can be issued for working at height. The plan must identify the equipment, the trained personnel required and the method to effectively get a person arrested down to the ground safely within a maximum time frame of 5 minutes. (The additional stress and shock placed on a person's heart with additional pressure restricting blood flow to the legs and feet and returning to the heart has been known to be the small difference between life and loss of life)

6.5 Work at less than 1.8 metres

- Falls from less than 1.8m can result in serious harm. All practicable steps must be taken to prevent such harm from occurring. An appropriate risk assessment shall be made by individuals working at elevations less than 1.8m and appropriate job hazard control measures shall be put in place.



6.6 Excavations

- Work at height (in regards to excavations) means working in a place where a person could be injured if they fell from one level to another. This can be above or below ground level (such as excavations) Refer to Safe Work practice for Excavation or [Worksafe Good Practice guidelines for excavation safety](#).

8.0 References

[Working at height attachment certificate](#)

[JHEA](#)



9.0 Appendix

Am I protected working at height?

