



National
Operational
Guidance

Control measure

Use appropriate work equipment



NFCC
Fire Central
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Control measure knowledge

Where it is not possible to avoid working at height near an unguarded edge then it is essential that a safe system of work is established. Where possible, a temporary physical barrier should be erected to provide collective protection to operational personnel. When the work at height environment is above ground level, ladders (for short duration tasks against stable structures) and mobile elevating working platforms (for long duration tasks and unstable structures) can be used to prevent the need to work near or on the unguarded edge. Such equipment may not be practical when the work at height environment is at ground level; for example, working at the top of cliff edges, sink holes, docks or quarries. Risk assessment should always determine correct equipment selection and deployment.

In any operation, sufficient measures should be identified or established to provide collective and personal fall protection to minimise the distance and/or consequences of a fall. Practical examples of collective protection include safety nets and soft landing systems where present (such as air bags installed close to the level of the work). Personal protection can include using rope-based systems that fall into three categories: work restraint, fall arrest and work positioning.

It is important that incident commanders select the most appropriate equipment and, where necessary, consider using supplementary equipment to add protection to the initial equipment and systems. Using items that will reduce uncontrolled or unexpected movement should also be considered.

Appropriate pre-use equipment and system checks should be conducted before personnel who will rely on work equipment for safety are deployed.

Strategic actions

Fire and rescue services should:

- Make appropriate work equipment available to prevent responders falling from height

Tactical actions

All personnel must:



- Use any work equipment or safety device provided in accordance with training and instructions

Incident commanders should:

- Select the most appropriate work at height equipment for the activities and hazards identified
- Use ladders for short duration tasks and request other equipment (e.g. aerial appliance) for other activities