



National
Operational
Guidance

Control measure

**Protect work at height equipment in
use or storage**



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council

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Control measure knowledge

Personnel need to regularly check the working area for anything that could present a risk to the integrity of the equipment. They should also avoid placing or storing equipment where it may be subject to contamination or damage.

Sharp or abrasive edges should be controlled using the following hierarchical approach:

- Removing the hazard, where feasible
- Avoiding the hazard
- Protection against the hazard

After hazard removal, the best form of protection for textile equipment is to avoid contact completely. This can normally be achieved by using anchors and rigging configurations that completely avoid, or deviate from, edges or by using other equipment that holds the ropes away from the abrasive or sharp edge. Consideration should be given to the potential consequences of failure and shifts of positions. The access or rescue path of textile equipment must be fully assessed for potential hazards.

Aside from personnel trying to avoid working where edges could compromise operational safety, the key control measure is to use supplementary equipment to protect the ropes when in contact with the edges in question; for example, rope-protecting edge rollers, tripods and cantilever frames.

Personnel should continually try to preserve the equipment and immediately report any damage or contamination.

If equipment is suspected of, or identified as, being compromised, it must be withdrawn, declared defective and managed under a strict quarantine following service procedure.

Equipment may be defective because of a known event or because of identified damage caused by use, misuse or poor storage. It may be that the equipment is contaminated and the substance or effects are unknown.

Quarantined equipment should undergo a thorough examination; the competent person will decide whether the equipment can be reinstated or whether it should be permanently withdrawn



and disposed of. A record of the decision and action taken should be made.

Strategic actions

Fire and rescue services must:

- Provide a means to record, quarantine, examine and reinstate contaminated or damaged work at height equipment

Fire and rescue services should:

- Provide a means to protect work at height equipment from damage when being transported, in use or in storage

Tactical actions

All personnel should:

- Check that work at height equipment has not been contaminated or damaged while stored
- Avoid edges that are unprotected and may damage work at height equipment
- Use equipment and procedures to protect rope and other work at height equipment from damage when in use

Incident commanders should:

- Ensure that regular checks of the surrounding area are carried out for potential hazards that could affect work at height equipment
- Ensure any defective work at height equipment is quarantined for the duration of the incident
- Ensure the reporting and replacement of defective equipment is carried out as per service procedure