



National  
Operational  
Guidance

# Hazard

## Work at height



**NFCC**  
National Fire  
Chiefs Council

Developed and maintained by the NFCC

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## Hazard - Work at height

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### Knowledge and understanding

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Hazard	Learning outcome
Work at height	Understand all associated hazard knowledge



## Control measure - Situational awareness: Work at height

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### TRAINING SPECIFICATION

#### Knowledge and understanding

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Control measure element	Learning outcome
Situational awareness: Work at height	Understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The various sources of information, which may be available to assist with working at height situational awareness</li><li>• When it may be necessary to adopt defensive tactics</li><li>• The impact of medical conditions or medication that could affect personnel working at height</li><li>• The need to monitor personnel working at height for physical impacts</li></ul>

#### Practical application



**Control measure element**

**Learning outcome**

Assign and brief personnel to carry out reconnaissance if support is needed to inform situational awareness

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Gather information from personnel at the scene of operations
- Gather information from personnel remote from the scene of operations

Consider adopting defensive tactics until specialist advice or assistance is obtained for work at height

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Make a risk-assessed decision to withdraw temporarily pending specialist advice or assistance

Be aware of any personnel who should not be deployed to work at height, due to medical conditions or medication

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Determine which personnel should not be deployed to work at height on medical grounds

Monitor personnel for signs of stress, anxiety, vertigo or dizziness while working at height

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Recognise any personnel suffering from adverse physical impacts when working at height



## Control measure - Hierarchy of control: Work at height

### TRAINING SPECIFICATION

#### Knowledge and understanding



**Control measure element**

**Learning outcome**

Health and safety measures for working at height

Understand:

- The importance of risk assessment, planning and supervision
- The need to identify competent people to work at height
- The need for the right type of equipment when working at height

The hierarchy of control for working at height

Understand:

- When it is appropriate to apply the 'avoid, prevent, minimise' approach
- When it is appropriate to use ladders

Protection measures when working at height

Understand:

- The use of collective protection systems
- The use of personal protection systems

Weather conditions

Understand:

- The need to monitor weather conditions when working at height

**Practical application**

**Control measure element**

**Learning outcome**

All personnel must:  
Use any work at height equipment or safety device provided in accordance with training and manufacturer's guidelines

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Use work at height equipment and safety devices in accordance with the training received
- Use work at height equipment and safety devices in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines



**Control measure element**

**Learning outcome**

Manage risk for work at height using a hierarchy of control approach

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Determine when it is appropriate to avoid, prevent or minimise the risks of working at height
- Consider the appropriate use of ladders

Select the most appropriate work at height equipment for the activities and hazards identified

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Consider the appropriate use of collective and personal protection systems

Monitor weather conditions when working at height

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Recognise weather conditions that may escalate the level of risk when working at height



## Control measure - Safe system of work: Work at height

### TRAINING SPECIFICATION

#### Knowledge and understanding

**Control measure element**

**Learning outcome**

Planning for working at height

Understand:

The benefits of planning for safe systems of work when working at height

Specialist resources for working at height

Understand:

- The benefits of obtaining support from specialist resources when working at height
- How to prepare for the arrival of the requested specialist resources



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Control measure element	Learning outcome
Cordon controls for working at height	Understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The specific safety considerations associated with cordons when working at height</li><li>• The factors to be considered when establishing cordons for working at height</li></ul>
Methods for working at height	Understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The methods for working at height</li><li>• The benefits and disbenefits for each method of working at height</li><li>• The suitability of fall protection systems</li><li>• The risk of suspension intolerance when deploying personnel to work at height</li></ul>
Safe work at height or rope rescue team typing	Understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The system of team typing for work at height and rope rescue</li></ul>
Equipment for working at height	Understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The need for work at height equipment to be compatible with other PPE and RPE</li><li>• The need for examination and inspection of work at height equipment before each use</li><li>• The regulations that apply to equipment</li></ul>
Anchor points for working at height	Understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How to carry out a risk assessment of the anchor points and system prior to them being used</li><li>• Why false chimneys should not be used as anchor points</li></ul>
Structural integrity when working at height	Understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The need to assess the integrity of any structure that is being relied on for working at height</li></ul>



**Control measure element**

**Learning outcome**

Establish arrangements to deal with firefighter emergencies

Understand:

- The need to establish a rescue plan and have adequate resources in place for personnel working at height

**Practical application**

**Control measure element**

**Learning outcome**

Fire control personnel should:  
Inform an available specialist adviser about incidents involving work at height

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Inform an appropriate tactical adviser that work at height is taking place at an incident

Incident commanders must:  
Ensure work at height equipment inspections have been carried out by a competent person

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Ensure the necessary inspections of work at height equipment are carried out by a competent person

Incident commanders must:  
Establish and maintain a recovery system for personnel deployed to work at height

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Establish a recovery system for personnel working at height
- Maintain a recovery system for personnel working at height

Incident commanders must:  
Ensure that emergency arrangements are maintained and resourced for the duration that personnel are subjected to working at height

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Establish emergency arrangements for personnel working at height
- Maintain emergency arrangements for personnel working at height

Incident commanders must:  
Ensure PPE is proportionate to the risk of objects falling from height

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Ensure personnel wear PPE that takes into account the risk of objects falling from height

Use ladders for short duration tasks and request other equipment, such as an aerial appliance, for other activities

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Select the most appropriate equipment based on the type and duration of the task or activities





<b>Control measure element</b>	<b>Learning outcome</b>
Consider requesting specialist work at height resources	Demonstrate the ability to: Request appropriate work at height specialists for the incident
Secure and prepare the scene prior to arrival of specialist work at height resources	Demonstrate the ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Secure the scene through the use of cordons</li><li>• Identify access routes and rendezvous points (RVPs)</li><li>• Gather information from on-site staff</li><li>• Appropriately isolate utilities and on-site machinery</li></ul>
Establish and control inner cordons , taking into account the incident type, items falling from height and wind conditions	Demonstrate the ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish and control inner cordons when personnel are working at height</li></ul>
Select appropriate methods to achieve work at height following a risk assessment	Demonstrate the ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Select the safest practical methods for work at height</li><li>• Consider the risk of suspension trauma when selecting work at height methods</li></ul>
Secure any unattended work at height systems to ensure they cannot be interfered with	Demonstrate the ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider the use of cordons or other measures to protect deployed work at height equipment</li></ul>
Ensure the suitability of the structure before carrying out work at height activities	Demonstrate the ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assess the suitability of structures to support the use of work at height equipment</li><li>• Consider using alternative methods or systems if there is any doubt about structural integrity</li></ul>



**Control measure element**

**Learning outcome**

Ensure anchor points are suitable for supporting the load that will be applied

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Ensure the anchor system is suitable and of sufficient strength and stability for the purpose of supporting any foreseeable loading



## Control measure - Use of secondary system

### TRAINING SPECIFICATION

#### Knowledge and understanding

**Control measure element**

**Learning outcome**

Use a secondary system

Understand:

- The benefits of having secondary systems in place when working at height
- The need to build in an appropriate level of redundancy when using work at height systems

#### Practical application

**Control measure element**

**Learning outcome**

Use secondary systems to provide redundancy when working at height

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Use appropriate secondary systems when working at height
- Build in an appropriate level of redundancy when working at height