



National  
Operational  
Guidance

# Control measure

## Use of secondary systems



**NFCC**  
National Fire  
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## Contents

Control measure - Use of secondary systems ..... 3



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### Control measure knowledge

Using rope-based systems for access and rescue gives additional flexibility in certain operational environments, but they can be vulnerable to damage or failure. This can lead to catastrophic failure.

Poor selection of, or damage to, anchor systems, poor stowage or maintenance, incorrect system selection or operator errors can put personnel and casualties in danger. Secondary systems should be used to backup any possible system failure and implemented wherever possible.

Redundancy should be built in to rope access and rope rescue systems, to act as a backup in case of failure. This can be done in many ways, but the most usual is to use a two-line system that starts at the anchors and works through the whole system to the operator and casualty.

### Strategic actions

Fire and rescue services should:

- Provide equipment for secondary systems to provide redundancy for working at height

### Tactical actions

Incident commanders should:

- Use secondary systems to provide redundancy when working at height