

Title:	Working at Heights	Date of Original Board Approval:	December 2018
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Location:	All RBG Properties	Ref. No:	HS-024

Objectives and Goals

Working at heights presents an increased risk of high severity injuries and death. This policy aims to:

- Minimize falls from heights and corresponding injuries/fatalities.
- Provide workers who use personal fall protection the knowledge about its purpose and use.
- Provide workers who may be exposed to the hazard of falling with adequate knowledge about fall hazards and general safety practices to work safely at heights.

Scope

This procedure applies to all RBG personnel and contractors (including sub-contractors) hired by RBG to carry out work at heights.

Working at heights includes:

- Working from portable ladders (does not include step stools of 1 metre or less).
- Working from scaffolds (rolling or fixed).
- Working within 2 metres of an unprotected edge that is 3 metres or higher.
- Work on a ladder or platform near a guardrail when the platform or ladder raises you above the guardrail.

Policy Statement

This policy is intended to provide all employees, contractors and subcontractors who have occasion to work at heights with the training and knowledge required when working at heights.

Definitions

Fall Protection: Any system that serves to protect a worker from falling or minimizes the travel distance in the event of a fall.

Guardrail: An assembly that provides a barrier to prevent a worker from falling from an edge of a surface.

Unprotected Edge: Any side or edge (except at entrances to points of access) of a walking or working surface (e.g., floor, ramp, or runway) where there is no wall or guardrail system.

Roles & Responsibilities

Managers

- Ensure employees receive appropriate training.

- Ensure employees are using and wearing personal protective equipment.
- Ensure scaffolding is erected by a competent person.
- Identify situations where a fall hazard exists and perform a hazard analysis of the work to be performed.
- Ensure a rescue plan is in place before workers use fall arrest harnesses.
- Ensure that any permanent anchors to be used have been inspected by a 3rd party and they passed inspection within the previous year.
- Ensure employees wear and use all required personal protective equipment, including guard rails as required.
- Provide a qualified spotter to observe the employee to minimize exposure to hazards.

Human Resources

- Identify Ministry approved vendors to provide training to applicable staff.
- Arrange training on the use of portable ladders and fall arrest.
- Maintain training records.
- Periodically review the Working at Heights policy

Employees

- Inspect portable ladders prior to use.
- Inspect all life safety equipment prior to use.
- Inspect work area for hazards.
- Inspect permanent anchors prior to every use.
- Ensure temporary anchors are adequate.
- Report to their manager if any equipment fails inspection.

Joint Health & Safety Committee

- Development of or on the improvement of existing safe work procedures, as needed.

Managers of Contractors and Sub-Contractors

- Ensure contractors and sub-contractors have appropriate training.
- Ensure contractors and sub-contractors are complying with applicable legislation.
- Provide a copy of this Working at Heights policy to the contractor and subcontractor prior to the commencement of work.
- Ensure employees wear and use all required personal protective equipment, including guard rails where required.

Standards and Practice

Portable Ladders (General)

- Portable ladders must be inspected prior to use.
- Choose a portable ladder of the correct height.
- Do not use boxes, blocks, tables or any other thing to gain greater height.

- Erect barriers and signage around the work area as directed by management.
- If the work to be performed is in an area where visibility is an issue (in stairwells, near corners, behind doors, etc.), use barriers and/or signs to warn pedestrian traffic of work zones (additional personnel may be required).
- When working from a ladder in a traffic area and effective barriers cannot be used additional personnel are required to brace the ladder and act as a safety spotter.
- Use fall protection PPE and equipment when working from ladders above 3 metres.
- Keep shoulders between vertical rails at all times – do not reach.
- Only reposition the ladder from the ground.
- Maintain three-point contact when climbing the ladder.
- Use extra care when working from a ladder on a mezzanine or balcony.
- Fall arrest harnesses are required when working near guardrails.
- Ladders must have labeling indicating the maximum working load.

Straight Ladders

- Rails must extend 1 metre beyond the contact point.
- Maintain a safe working angle of 1 metre out for every 4 metres of height.
- Extension ladders must have at least a 3-rung overlap.
- Ladders over 6 metres in length must be tied off at point of contact or braced by a helper at the bottom of the ladder.
- Erect ladders on a firm, level surface.

Step Ladders

- Do not use the top two steps.
- The ladder should be fully extended and locked in place.
- The ladder should be set up to face the work whenever possible.

Scaffolds

- Only erect scaffolds on firm and level surfaces.
- Before using rolling scaffolds, ensure the brakes are tested and that they function correctly.
- To increase platform height, outriggers approved by the scaffold manufacturer may be used.
- Do not exceed the rated working load for the scaffold.

Flat Rooftops

When no guardrails or walls less than 1.2 metres are present do not approach within 2 metres of the roof edge without:

- Wearing appropriate fall arrest equipment or installing adequate temporary guardrails.
- Erecting stanchions 2 metres from the edge and place “caution” tape between stanchions as a visible reminder to stay clear of the edge.

Sloped Rooftops

- Install adequate temporary guardrails or wear appropriate fall arrest equipment.

Elevated Work Platforms

- Only trained and competent individuals may operate an elevated work platform.
- Do not exceed rated working load of platform.
- Operate platform according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Competent operators may take a passenger for photographic and inspection purposes only after the passenger has received training in the use of fall arrest harnesses.

Training

- All personnel using portable ladders must attend a ladder safety training session.
- All personnel using fall arrest or travel restraint systems must be trained in the proper use and inspection of the equipment by a Ministry of Labour approved training provider.
- All personnel that supervise the erection, alteration or dismantling of a scaffold must be trained by a Ministry of Labour approved training provider.
- All personnel operating an elevated work platform must be trained by a Ministry of Labour approved training provider.
- Staff conducting work at heights must complete a Working at Heights training program conducted by a Ministry of Labour approved training provider.