



Policy ID: P29	Last Reviewed: 10 May 2026	Next Review: 10 January 2027	Version: 1.0
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## WORKING AT HEIGHT POLICY

### 1. Introduction

Falls from height remain the single biggest cause of workplace deaths and one of the main causes of major injury in the UK. A place is considered to be at height if a person could be injured falling from it, even if it is at or below ground level.

**MW Fire Ltd** (the Company) is committed to ensuring that all work at height is properly planned, appropriately supervised, and carried out in a manner that protects the safety of all employees, subcontractors, and anyone else who may be affected. This policy sets out the Company's approach to managing the risks associated with working at height and applies to all employees and subcontractors engaged on Company work.

### 2. Legal Framework

This policy is underpinned by the following legislation and guidance:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Work at Height Regulations 2005
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
- HSE Guidance INDG401: Working at Height — A Brief Guide

### 3. The Hierarchy of Control

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 require that work is approached in a specific order of preference. The Company will apply this hierarchy whenever work at height is planned:

**First**, avoid working at height altogether wherever it is reasonably practicable to do so.

**Second**, where work at height cannot be avoided, use the most appropriate access equipment to prevent a fall, selecting from the options set out in the Equipment Selection Flowchart at [Appendix A](#).

**Third**, where the risk of a fall cannot be entirely eliminated, implement measures to minimise the distance and consequences of a fall should one occur.



#### **4. Planning and Risk Assessment**

No work at height will be undertaken without adequate planning and a suitable risk assessment. The risk assessment must identify the nature and duration of the task, the most appropriate access equipment, the qualifications required to use that equipment, the condition of the working surface and surrounding environment, and any additional hazards such as overhead obstructions, proximity to traffic, or adverse weather.

Where a client site has its own permit to work system or access restrictions, these must be complied with in full before any work at height begins.

#### **5. Equipment Selection**

The correct selection of access equipment is essential and must be determined before work begins using the Working at Height Equipment Selection Flowchart at **Appendix A**.

Stepladders, ladders, hop-ups, and podiums are suitable for short-duration tasks of a light nature. Steps and ladders must be marked BS EN 131 and podiums must be marked PAS 250 or BS 8620. The Company owns a telescopic tower scaffold for use where a podium or ladder is insufficient. This is a self-contained system that does not fall under the PASMA standard, and operatives must be briefed on its correct erection and use before deployment. Where a conventional mobile tower scaffold is required, a PASMA-qualified operative must be assigned to build, move, and dismantle it.

MEWPs are the preferred option for longer duration or higher-level tasks. Operatives must hold a current IPAF PAL card for the category of MEWP being used. Where no suitable equipment option exists, the operative must consult the client before proceeding.

#### **6. Equipment Inspection and Maintenance**

All access equipment must be inspected before use. A visual pre-use check must be carried out by the operative before each deployment. Equipment must not be used if it shows signs of damage, instability, or deterioration.

Where scaff-tags are attached to equipment, the first inspection must be recorded on the tag and inspections must continue at intervals not exceeding seven days.

MEWPs hired from external suppliers must be accompanied by a current service record. This must be checked on delivery before the equipment is used.

All Company-owned access equipment is recorded in the equipment register and is subject to periodic inspection in accordance with PUWER and LOLER requirements.

#### **7. Fall Arrest**

The Company currently operates scissor lift MEWPs only, which do not require the use of a fall arrest harness. The Company does own a number of harnesses, and it is the Company's intention to ensure these are formally inspected and that at least one nominated person is trained in their use and has the ability to inspect them formally, in the coming year.

In the meantime, the Company's position is that harnesses are not a mandatory requirement for current MEWP operations. Where a risk assessment identifies that a harness should be used as a control measure in specific circumstances, this will be stated explicitly in the relevant RAMS documentation and the operative must comply accordingly. Any operative required to use a harness must first receive formal instruction in its correct fitting, use, and pre-use inspection. Until that training is in place and recorded, no operative will be required to use a harness as part of their normal duties.

## 8. Company Responsibilities

The Company will ensure that all work at height is planned, risk assessed, and carried out using appropriate equipment, that operatives are trained to the required standard, that Company-owned equipment is maintained and inspected, that the Equipment Selection Flowchart is available to all operatives, and that random audit inspections are carried out using the WAH Site Monitoring Form at **Appendix B**.

## 9. Operative Responsibilities

All operatives will use the Equipment Selection Flowchart before beginning any work at height, use only equipment they are trained and qualified to operate, carry out a pre-use visual inspection before deployment, follow all safe systems of work and risk assessment controls, comply with client site permit to work requirements, and report any accidents, near misses, or equipment defects to the office immediately.

## 10. Training

The Company's minimum training standard for MEWP operation is the IPAF PAL card. Operatives must hold a current and valid PAL card for the category of MEWP they are required to operate.

Where tower scaffold erection is required, a PASMA-qualified operative will be assigned to the task.

Training records are maintained by the Company and are reviewed as part of the annual subcontractor assessment process.

## 11. Policy Review

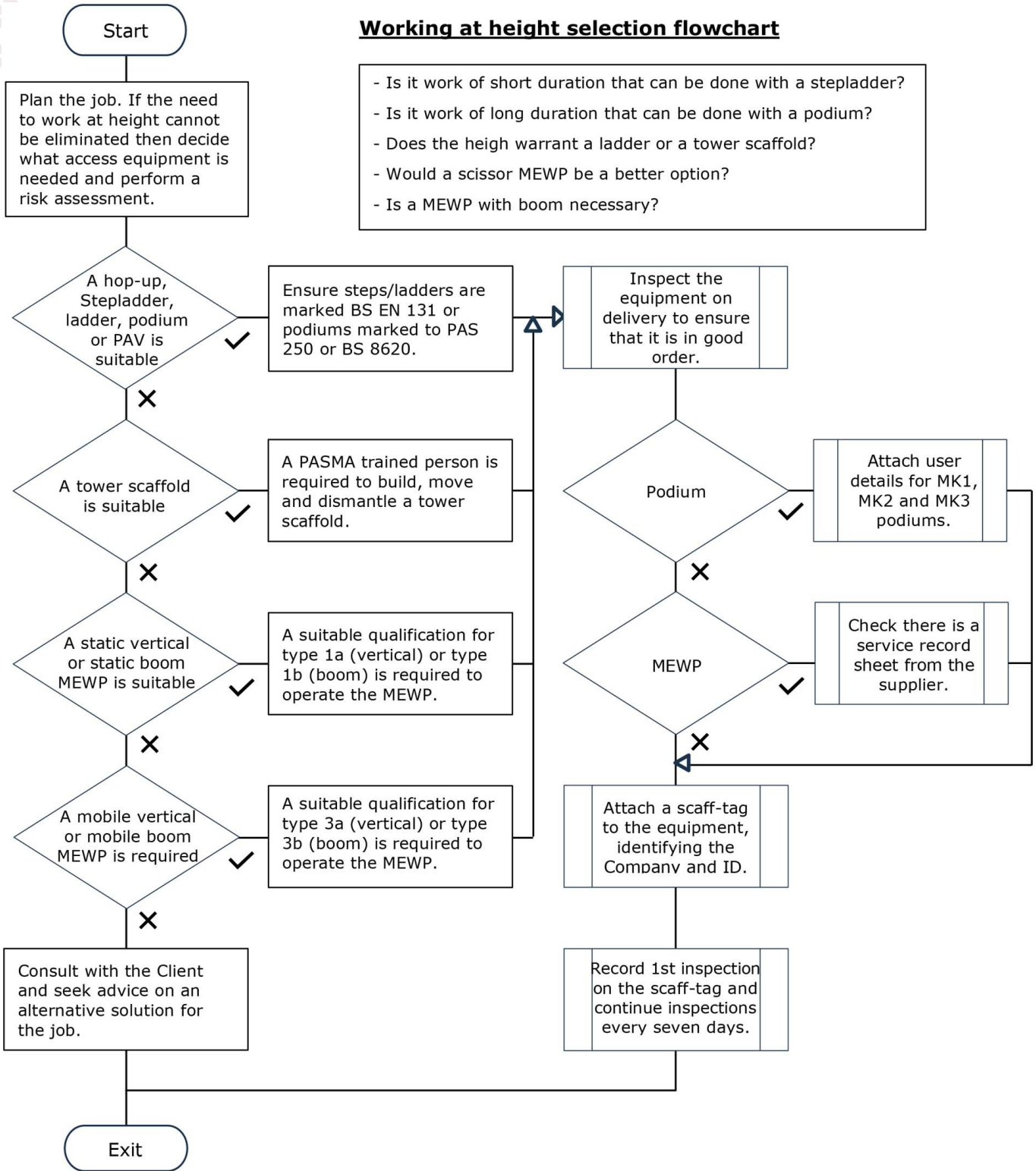
Compliance with this policy is monitored through random site audit inspections carried out using the WAH Site Monitoring Form at **Appendix B**. Completed forms are retained in the Health and Safety weekly pack as evidence of active monitoring.

This policy will be reviewed annually or following any incident involving work at height, whichever is sooner.

This policy should be read alongside the Company's Health and Safety Policy.

## APPENDIX A

### Working at height selection flowchart



- Is it work of short duration that can be done with a stepladder?
- Is it work of long duration that can be done with a podium?
- Does the height warrant a ladder or a tower scaffold?
- Would a scissor MEWP be a better option?
- Is a MEWP with boom necessary?

## APPENDIX B

### WORKING AT HEIGHT MONITORING



Person Responsible:		Date of audit:	
Signature/Initialled:		Site:	
		Location:	
Note:	Regulation 5. Every employer shall ensure that no person engages in any activity, including organisation, planning and supervision, in relation to work at height or work equipment for use in such work unless he is competent to do so or, if being trained, is being supervised by a competent person.		

No	Items to be checked	✓	✗	N/A
1	Are there any fragile/unsafe areas where work is being carried out at height?			
2	Where persons are working within 2m of an unprotected edge or fragile surface is there adequate protection? E.g. handrail of at least 1100mm			
3	Are employees adequately trained and instructed?			
4	Has the job involving working at height been planned and risk assessed?			
5	Are all ladders in good condition?			
6	Is work at height restricted; overhanging ledges, crush risk?			
7	Is all access equipment placed on firm level ground?			
8	Do podiums have out-riggers attached?			
9	Are MEWPS being operated only by IPAF trained persons?			
10	Is there a safety harness present for each MEWP?			
11	Is there a rescue plan and is it known by all operatives working with a MEWP?			
12	Is the MEWP operator working alone without a banksman?			
13	Can the MEWP operator produce pre-use inspection evidence?			

No	Action Required	By who	By when