

SAFE WORK PROCEDURES SCAFFOLDS



SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **A person who erects, alters or dismantles any scaffold must be competent to do the work safely.** A high risk work licence is not required by a person who erects, alters or dismantles a scaffold where there is a risk of a person falling four metres or less from the platform or structure.
2. All scaffolding from which a person or object could fall more than 4 metres must not be used unless a competent person (e.g., licensed scaffolder or qualified engineer) has provided written confirmation that the scaffold has been completed.
3. A SWMS must be prepared for any work where a person may fall more than 2 metres from any scaffold (or 3 metres in SA, or housing construction work in Qld).
4. Scaffolds should be designed for the most adverse combination of dead and live loads that can reasonably be expected during the period the scaffold is in use.
5. The electricity supply authority must be consulted to determine a safe system of work for scaffolding and associated work closer than 4.0m to electrical service lines.

Sequence	Identified hazards	Key processes to be followed	Precautions / PPE required
1. General precautions	Space restrictions Working height Assembly	Component scaffolds generally have minimum width of 1.2m, max. 3.0m. Height of freestanding scaffolds must not exceed 3 times the minimum base dimension – ties or outriggers are required if this height is exceeded. Always follow manufacturer’s assembly instructions when erecting scaffold. Competent persons only are to erect scaffolding. Use only components designed and provided for the type of scaffold. Appropriate warning signs must be fitted to unattended and incomplete or unsafe scaffolds to prevent unauthorised access. Check the stability of the completed scaffold before allowing any person to climb on to or work from the scaffold.	Ensure that all components are fitted together correctly. Ensure that all mating surfaces are clean and undamaged. Do not mix components. Use barrier tape, etc., to prevent unauthorised access. Do not climb on to or work from an unstable scaffold.
2. Erection – Fixed	Foundation Footings Bracing	Ensure that footings are firm (compacted), well drained, and stable. Timber sole boards and baseplates must be used under feet on soft surface. Use levelling screws to ensure that all uprights are vertical and that all feet are in firm contact with the surface on which it is erected. Fit plan and vertical bracing to ensure stability of scaffold.	Dig into slopes for level footing. Do not use metal plate under feet. Ensure that collar locking device on base frame is properly engaged.
3. Erection – Mobile	Foundation Castors Bracing	Mobile scaffolds should only be used on a firm, level, and stable surface. Mobile scaffold must not be used on slope of more than 7 degrees. Ensure that all wheels turn smoothly, and that all wheel locks are operable. Use levelling screws to ensure that all uprights are vertical and that all wheels have full contact with the surface on which it is erected. Fit plan and vertical bracing to ensure stability of scaffold.	Do not use mobile scaffolds on unstable, uneven or sloping surfaces. All wheels must have locks fitted. Ensure that all wheels are locked during erection of scaffold.
4. Access	Stairs Ladders	Access stairways should be provided in preference to ladders. Stairs should be erected inside the scaffold, and a protected opening (e.g., hinged trap door) provided for entry to and exit from the scaffold or working platform. Access ladder/s must be fitted inside the scaffold assembly for access to the working platform. Ladders must be hooked over the end frame, be braced to a lower end frame, and extend at least 0.9m above the working platform.	Climbing on scaffold frame should not be avoided. Never climb up the outside of a scaffold. Access openings should be protected on working platforms to prevent falls. Ladders must be approved industrial type.

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5. Working platforms	Construction of platform Guardrails and edge protection	Working platform should be a “captive” type which locks onto the frame. Working platform surface should be non-slip finish. Never place a loading greater than the marked SWL on a working platform. Each working platform and access platform must have full edge protection comprising handrail, midrail and toe board or a handrail and infill panel.	The load on the platform includes the weight of all persons, plus tools, materials and equipment. Top rail should be between 0.9m and 1.1m above working surface.
6. Working on scaffolds	Risk of falling Falling objects Electrical hazards	Always face ladder, climb slowly, and keep both hands on stiles. Use rope to raise tools, material and equipment to working platform. Do not reach out from scaffold beyond arm’s length. Keep the whole of the body within the confines of guardrails. Do not use ladders of any type from a working platform of a scaffold. Hoisting equipment must not be attached to scaffold unless explicitly indicated that it is safe to do so by manufacturer or supplier. Wear protective footwear if material or equipment being handled or used could pose risk of foot injury should it fall. Provide exclusion zone around scaffold where risk of falling objects is present (if practicable). Head protection must be worn by persons working in vicinity of scaffold if risk of being struck by falling objects exists. Exercise care when handling metal objects in vicinity of electric wiring.	Climb and descend ladders safely. Do not carry objects in hand while climbing or descending ladder. Work only from working platform. Exercise care when raising tools, equipment and materials to working platform. Foot protection must be worn. Erect containment screen around scaffold if exclusion zone cannot be provided. Head protection must be worn Maintain safe approach distances from electrical installations and services.
7. Relocation of mobile scaffolds	Stability – mobile scaffolds	Ensure that scaffold wheel locks are engaged before any person climbs on to or works from the scaffold. A scaffold must not be moved while any person is still on the scaffold. The path of travel of a mobile scaffold should be checked for obstructions, holes, electric leads and wires, etc., before moving the scaffold. Check the stability of the scaffold before re-using after relocating – relock wheels and adjust levelling screws if necessary.	Remove loose items before moving. Move scaffold carefully to avoid tipping over.

PRECAUTIONS:

The following precautions are to be observed in areas where these procedures are carried out.

