

Considerations for a safe system of work, for work at height.

A safe system of work should follow from an assessment of risks for one or all of:

the individual task	(e.g. atrium access)
the industry concerned	(e.g. cleaning, rigging)
the generic activity	(e.g. rope access, work positioning, fall arrest)

Creating a safe system of work:

A linear process can be identified:

1. Assessment

An overview of all the factors affecting the work task.

2. Planning

Identification of the most efficient way to carry out the work, bearing in mind all the factors identified in the assessment.

3. Selection of equipment

Phases 1 and 2 should determine the equipment to be used. Suitable equipment for the task in hand is vital to a complete safe system of work.

4. Selection of competent personnel

The operatives and supervisory personnel must be competent to work safely in accordance with the methods identified in the Assessment and Planning phases of this process, and in accordance with the type of work equipment being used.

5. Work task

The actual carrying out of the job requires a method statement which will cover the work tasks in detail. This will take into account access to the work site of personnel with the practical skills to carry out the job, and cover the eventuality of rescue.

6. Review

Following the completion of the work, it is useful to review the process and identify problems and successes for future projects.

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