

Falls From Height

What Do I Need To Know?

1 Always Consider the Hierarchy of Control When Working at Height

Avoidance Avoid all unnecessary work at height.

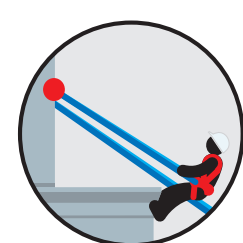
Permanent access Use walkways and gantries where possible.

Temporary working platform The use of scaffolding, cradles and mobile platforms.

Collective measures are preferable to personal measures Handrails, safety netting, airbags or landing mats.



Work Restraint



Work Position



Fall Arrest

2 If a Fall Can Occur You Must Be Protected

- Never work alone
- Check that you have safe clearance below
- Always have a rescue plan.

PPE for arresting falls must include:

Anchorage that are rated to AS1891.4 or equivalent

A Full Body Harness correctly fitted

A Fall Arrest Device that will:

- Ensure shock loads do not exceed 6kN
- Arrest the fall in a known distance
- Arrest the fall and prevent the user colliding with obstacles

Connectors: suitable for linking the system

3 The Effects a Fall Will Have On You

Even if you use suitable fall arrest equipment a fall will still be a traumatic experience. You may collide with obstacles during the fall. You may be unconscious or in shock. Suspension in a harness if left unchecked can cause you serious medical complications (See 4).

4 Suspension in a Harness Can Lead to Suspension Trauma

If you are suspended after a fall you may experience pressure points from the harness that can cause pain and restrict your circulation. If this is left unchecked it can lead to:

- Tingling sensations in your limbs
- Dizziness

– Eventually a lack of consciousness.

If you can move you may be able to relieve the effects, but you need to be rescued. A temporary aid may also help reduce the effects.

If during the fall you are knocked unconscious then you will be unaware of these effects. They will still occur, but you will not

be able to ease them and you need to be rescued.

The effects can begin within a few minutes.

Rescue should be carried out as quickly and as safely as possible. Ideally rescue should take no longer than 5 minutes.

When the pressure is released from the harness you must also

take care as blood and toxins will be released back into your system. You need to help prevent this happening too fast. It is better to sit or stand, not to exert yourself and seek medical advice - Tell them what happened

7 After the Rescue

They may still need care. Call for medical assistance

- Do not lie the casualty down
- Let them stand or sit upright
- If sitting on the floor you can raise their knees to their chest
- Stay with them until help arrives.

6 Approaches to Rescue

There are many types of rescue available. You must plan to find the one for you. Always avoid placing others at unnecessary risk during the rescue.

Improvised / unplanned recovery

- May be effective
- Can place rescuers at risk
- There is a risk of failure.

Planned / application specific

- Very effective if well planned and assessed
- May use a pre assembled kit such as a Gotcha™
- Requires adequate training
- Must be at the workplace to be effective.

Permanent rescue team / emergency services

- They need to be aware of your needs in advance
- They must be able to get to you in time
- They should be called even if you intend to use one of the other approaches.

5 Take the Pressure Out of Suspension

Footloops or temporary supports can reduce the effects of harness suspension. You must remember:

- It only works on conscious casualties
- It is not a replacement for rescue.

Appropriate use can:

- Give you more time to carry out the rescue
- Allow the casualty to move assisting circulation
- Help to relieve pressure from the harness
- Reduce or delay the effects of Suspension Trauma

To be effective it must be at the work site.



If you do not understand the danger of falls from heights you need training!