

QSCU OHS&R MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

PROCEDURE 49 – Scaffolding & Ladders

1. PURPOSE

This procedure describes requirements for the use of scaffolding, ladders and portable steps, including the erection, inspection and dismantling of scaffolds.

2. MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

1. A risk assessment shall be conducted prior to commencing any work involving the use, erection or dismantling of scaffolding and or portable ladders where work is to be conducted in an area of an unprotected drop of more than 2 metres.
2. The location of scaffolding, ladders and portable steps shall take into consideration the proximity of electrical power lines, hot or fragile piping, traffic access ways (cars, cranes, forklifts, etc.), emergency access/exit routes and any other hazards in the area and be addressed accordingly.
3. Scaffolds shall only be erected, altered, maintained or demolished by suitably qualified and competent persons. The qualified and competent persons shall be registered / certificated in accordance with any applicable local regulations or codes of practice.
4. Scaffolds shall be designed for the purpose for which they are to be used and shall be constructed of materials which will not be adversely affected by any chemicals or physical conditions to which the scaffolding may be subjected.
5. Scaffolds shall only be accessed via approved stairways or properly installed and secured ladders.
6. Scaffolds shall be inspected, approved and labelled by a qualified and competent person prior to use. The qualified and competent person shall be registered / certificated in accordance with any applicable local regulations or codes of practice. Unapproved scaffolds, including scaffolds under construction or demolition shall be suitably labelled as "Unfit for Use" or equivalent and or barricaded to prevent use.
7. Scaffolds shall be re-inspected by a competent person prior to every use.
8. Damaged scaffolding shall be suitably labelled or barricaded to prevent use and shall be removed from service as soon as possible after the damage is detected. Repairs to scaffolding shall only be performed by a qualified and competent person who shall be registered / certificated in accordance with any applicable local regulations or codes of practice.
9. Items used on or from scaffolding shall be carried or lowered to the floor (including demolition). Under no circumstances shall any item be thrown or dropped from a scaffold.
10. Fall protection shall be provided and worn when working at a height more than 2 metres above the surrounding area, or when the scaffolding / ladder base is within 2 metres of an unprotected drop of 2 metres below the surrounding area.

QSCU OHS&R MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

PROCEDURE 49 – Scaffolding & Ladders

11. Where practicable, use of ladders shall be restricted to provision of access to a suitable permanent or temporary work area, scaffold or platform.
12. Where work is to be performed from a ladder, the ladder shall conform to the relevant Australian Standard and be positioned so that the work area is within comfortable, safe reach of the ladder and the nature of work shall be assessed to ensure the ladder will not be overloaded. A-Frame step ladders shall be used where practicable.
13. Metal ladders or ladders reinforced with wire shall not be used in the vicinity of electrical conductors, equipment or apparatus.
14. Portable ladders shall be installed so that:
 - the stiles rest on a firm, level footing;
 - there is a clear, unobstructed landing space at the base and, where applicable at the head of the ladder;
 - the side rails or stiles rise to a height of at least one metre above the platforms they serve or at least one metre above the highest rung which will be stood on; and
 - the top and the base of ladders are adequately fixed (are secured and have brakes) to prevent slippage or movement.
15. A person shall be stationed at the foot of all portable ladders while the top is being tied (or otherwise secured) or where it is not practicable to securely fix the ladder.
16. Where practicable, ladders shall be inclined between 70 and 75 degrees from horizontal and shall be fitted with suitable non skid treads. This 70-75 degree angle is equivalent to the ladder being installed such that the horizontal distance from the top support to the foot of the ladder is equal to one quarter of the length of the ladder.
17. The slope of front and rear stiles of step ladders shall be not less than 60 degrees no more than 70 degrees to the horizontal.
18. Where any ladder rises a vertical distance of 6 metres or more, intermediate landing places shall be provided such that the vertical distance between any two successive landing places does not exceed 6 metres.
19. Ladders, step ladders or portable steps shall be inspected prior to every use. Damaged or defective equipment shall be immediately withdrawn from service and shall be appropriately labelled to prevent further use before repair or disposal. All repairs shall be carried out by a qualified and competent person.
20. A site register of company ladders, step ladders and portable steps shall be prepared and an inspection and maintenance schedule developed for each item of equipment.

QSCU OHS&R MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

PROCEDURE 49 – Scaffolding & Ladders

21. OHS&R training records shall be retained indefinitely.
22. Regular reviews of this procedure shall be conducted to ensure compliance with the mandatory requirements.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsible Manager

Ensure compliance with the requirements of this procedure.

4. REFERENCE DOCUMENTATION

- A. AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND OHS&R LEGISLATION