

Safeguard

High Risk Work Elevating work platforms



Government
of South Australia

SafeWork SA

Objective

To provide guidance on the safe use of elevating work platforms (EWPs).

Background

EWPs are powered mobile plant designed to lift or lower people and equipment to a work location, by means of a telescoping, hinged or articulated device, or any combination of these devices beyond a base support.

Risk control measures

Selection of the appropriate equipment for the task

Consideration must be given to each task and any potential associated hazards to ensure that an EWP is suitable to use and that the type of EWP selected is appropriate for the task e.g. indoors or outdoors, presence of overhead hazards, condition of supporting surfaces. It may be appropriate to use an alternative means of reaching the area (e.g. scaffolding) to carry out the work.

A thorough task, site and equipment specific hazard and risk assessment must be undertaken prior to operating an EWP. This may include, but is not limited to, the height, reach, crush or trapping hazards, safe working load, ground conditions and terrain, any electrical hazards or restricted working space.

Secondary guarding devices

Various secondary guarding devices are available which may help in the prevention of crushing or trapping injuries on mobile EWPs, depending on the type of EWP and work being undertaken. These include:

- protective structure
 - a device attached or fixed to the existing guardrails that provides a protective barrier around the operator.
- presence sensing device
 - a device activated by the application of a force or pressure acting on it generally stopping the movement of the EWP to minimise harm.
- proximity system
 - a system where one or more sensors are mounted around the EWP, an alarm sounds and movement speed is initially reduced and then stopped within a safe distance of an object.

Where secondary guarding devices are intended to be fitted to an existing EWP, a specific risk assessment should be undertaken prior to installation to ensure that the changes do not introduce new hazards or negatively impact the operation of the EWP.

Operator training

Training of operators in the use of an EWP and its functions, including safe work methods and emergency procedures, must be provided prior to the commencement of work.

Note: For a boom-type EWP, where the boom length exceeds 11 metres, the operator must hold a High Risk Work Licence.

Pre-operational checks

Before use and at the start of each work shift, an EWP should be checked and tested by the operator in accordance with the manufacturer's pre-operational checklist. Checks should include the safety devices and interlock controls. If faults are identified, the EWP must be placed out of action (tagged out) and the EWP must be rectified before being placed back into operation.

Siting

The stability of an EWP must be carefully assessed, in particular circumstances such as soft ground, sloping surfaces, overhead power lines, underground services, ground cavities and prevailing wind conditions.

Wheel-mounted EWP

Pneumatic-tyred wheels must be free of defects and inflated to the correct pressures to ensure stability.

Base controls

Base controls should not be used when personnel are on the platform, except in an emergency or for maintenance purposes. All EWPs should be fitted with an emergency retrieval system or be provided with auxiliary retrieval equipment to allow the safe evacuation of personnel from the platform.

Safe working load

The total weight of personnel, tools and material being loaded on the platform shall not exceed the rated load capacity of an EWP.

Operating instructions

Operating instructions must be clearly and permanently displayed on the EWP.

Safety harness

Full safety harness should be worn by all personnel on the platform of a boom-type EWP and be secured to the EWP anchor point.

Where there is a risk of a free fall, a fall-arrest harness designed for attachment to a lanyard assembly, including a personal energy absorber, must be worn by each person on the EWP.

Work in a public place

When an EWP is used in a public place or roadway, suitable barricades need to be positioned so that pedestrians or vehicles are kept at a safe distance. Warning signs should be displayed and the appropriate approvals obtained from local authorities.

Maintenance requirements

All maintenance, inspection and repair should be undertaken at regular intervals in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. An EWP owner may engage a competent person to ensure that maintenance is properly undertaken.

All EWPs 'in-service' should be regularly inspected and must be subject to a major inspection by the end of the tenth year.

Further information

Code of Practice – Managing the Risks of Plant in the Workplace

*AS 2550.10: Cranes, hoists and winches – Safe use.
Part 10: Mobile elevating work platforms*

Elevating Work Platform Association of Australia
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safe, fair, productive working lives

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