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Title: Working at Height Procedure	
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1. Purpose:

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure all risks associated with working at height within Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) workplaces are identified and managed.

2. Scope:


This procedure applies to all tasks that require working at a height which are performed in DEECD workplaces including schools, central and regional offices. No DEECD employee is to work at a height of 2 metres or above unless their role specifically requires them to do so i.e. maintenance personnel that are required to clean gutters as per their job description.

3. References:

- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007*
- *Prevention of Falls in General Construction Compliance Code; Edition 1: September 2008*
- *AS1562.1:1992- Design and installation of sheet roof and wall cladding – Metal*
- *AS1562.2:1999- Design and installation of sheet roof and wall cladding – Corrugated fibre-reinforced cement*
- *AS1562.3:2006- Design and installation of sheet roof and wall cladding – Plastic*
- *AS 1891:2007- Industrial fall arrest systems and devices-Harness and ancillary equipment*

4. Definitions:

- Contractor** Contractors include any service providers/individuals who are not direct employees of DEECD and are providing services/works in relation to maintenance and repair work. This includes contractor employees, sub contractors and sub contractors employees. Services can be of a long or short nature.
- Deputy Health and Safety Representative:** An elected employee responsible for representing employees within a Designated Work Group (DWG) on matters relating to Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in the absence of the HSR.
- Fall arrest device:** A device, which when worn and used correctly, would either safely restrain or arrest a person from falling while working height.
- Hazard:** Anything with the potential to cause harm, injury, illness or loss.
- Health and Safety Representative (HSR):** An elected employee responsible for representing employees within a Designated Work Group (DWG) on matters relating to OHS.
- Management OHS Nominee:** A position nominated by the Workplace Manager to oversee the operational aspects of implementing health, safety and wellbeing initiatives, policies and procedures.
- Risk:** A description of the likelihood and consequence of a hazard causing injury or illness.
- Safe Work Procedure** Are documented procedures that outline:
- The hazards associated with performing a particular task (which may include equipment use, or working in hazardous environments);

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(SWP)

- Safety instructions in performing that task including any checks and precautions to be exercised;
- Any required PPE to protect employees, students, contractors and visitors; and
- A list of the persons authorised to supervise and train persons in how to undertake the task safely

Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS)

A document which describes the high risk work being performed, the health and safety risks associated with the work and the risk control measures that will be applied to ensure the work is carried out in a safe manner.

Working at height:


Working at a height of over 2 metres (measured from the soles of your feet to the ground).

Work Positioning System

Equipment that enables a person to be positioned and safely supported at a work location for the duration of the task being undertaken at height.

Workplace Manager:

The Manager or Principal responsible for the school, central office, regional office or other DEECD workplace.

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5. Responsibility:

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** is responsible for:

- Identifying working at height hazards within the workplace;
- Consulting with HSRs and employees in relation to identifying and managing working at height hazards;
- Ensuring risk assessments are conducted for identified working at height tasks;
- Reviewing controls for working at height risks for effectiveness and the OHS Risk Register;
- Issuing a Permit to Work to a contractor or employee that shall be working at height at 2 metres or above; and
- Complying with legislation relating to working at height.

HSRs:

The functions of the **HSRs** can include:

- Reporting working at height hazards to the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee; and
- Assisting with risk assessments.

Employees, and volunteers are responsible for:

- Reporting working at height hazards to the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee;
- Assisting the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee with risk assessments; and
- Complying with SWP and the Permit to Work for working at height.

Contractors are responsible for:

- Reporting working at height hazards to the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee;
- Assisting the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee with risk assessments; and;
- Complying with SWMS or SWP and the Permit to Work for working at height.

6. Procedure:


6.1 Identify Hazards Associated with Working at Height

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee**, in consultation with HSRs, employees and contractors, is to identify all tasks which involve working at height at 2 metres or above within the workplace.

Examples of working at height tasks where falls could occur include:

- Working on roofs;
- Cleaning windows;
- Air-conditioning maintenance;
- Erecting signs and displays;
- Ladder work;
- Working near holes, pits and shafts; and
- Working on fragile, slippery or sloping surfaces.

In addition to the above the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** should

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also consider the hazards posed to persons below those working at heights by falling objects.

6.2 Risk Assessment when employees are undertaking a Working at Height task

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** is to conduct a risk assessment for each task which involves working at height in the workplace, where an employee is required to work at a height. All risk assessments are to be conducted in consultation with:

- The HSRs;
- Employees; and
- Relevant standards, codes of practice, compliance code or legislation.

The risk assessment is to be conducted using the risk matrix outlined in **Risk Management Procedure** and documented on the **Task Based Risk Management Form**.

6.3 Controlling Risks Posed by Working at Height

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee**, in consultation with the **HSR** and **employees** needs to control risks associated with working at height. If an employee is required to work at a height of 2 metres or above a **Safe Work Procedure** (SWP) must be developed and the employee trained in the procedure and deemed competent before the work can be performed.

A **Permit to Work – Working at Heights** must also be completed by the employee.

If a contractor is required to work at or above a height of 2 metres a **Safe Work Method Statement** (SWMS) or equivalent must be supplied by the contractor. A **Permit to Work – Working at Heights** at 2 metres or above must also be completed by the contractor.


Specifically, a permit to work should be issued for work:

- on any structure being constructed, demolished, maintained, repaired or cleaned where work is performed at or above 2 metres;
- on a fragile, slippery or unstable surface;
- using equipment to gain access to an elevated level;
- on a sloping surface on which it is difficult to maintain balance;
- involving an elevated work platform such as a cherry picker or scissor lift;
- in close proximity i.e. within 2 metres, of an unprotected edge; and
- in close proximity to a hole, shaft or pit.

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** should make sure that all control measures are included on the SWP or SWMS and Permit to Work. **Contractors and employees (i.e. maintenance personnel)** must make sure that they only perform work so as to comply with all the control measures indicated in the SWP or SWMS and Permit to Work.

When determining controls to reduce risks, the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** must follow the hierarchy of control outlined in the **Risk Management Procedure**. Examples of controls (from most to least effective) could include:

- Eliminate the need to work at heights (e.g. Installing air conditioning at ground level, redesigning roof guttering systems to eliminate or minimise the need to collect balls or clean gutters);
- Provision of passive fall prevention systems (e.g. edge protection, roof walkways and elevated work platforms such as scissor lifts, boom lifts and scaffolding);
- Installing roof anchor points and harness/lanyard systems for either fall restraint or falls arrest

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systems;

- Provision of industrial rated ladders and associated anchor points;
- Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (e.g. gloves, footwear etc)

6.3.1 Permit to Work

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** is responsible for ensuring the Working at Height Procedure and associated *Permit to Work* system is followed for the work to be completed if it includes working at height.

The **Permit to Work- Working at Heights** must be signed by the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee**. The original is to be maintained by the contractor/employee completing the work and a copy maintained by the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee**. The original is returned at the completion of work and signed off by both the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** and the contractor/employee. The original copy of the permit is to be filed by the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee**.

6.3.2 Falling Objects

When employees, contractors and/or visitors may be exposed to the risk of falling objects, barricading off the area immediately below the work and posting warning signs i.e. 'No Go' areas (see **Consultation and Communication Procedure**) is required.

6.3.3 Working on Roofs

Roofs on which employees and/or contractors are required to work on should be as specified in AS1562 for metal, corrugated fibre-reinforced cement and plastic roofs. Any other roofs should be considered as fragile. The installation of permanent walkways and stairs should be considered for roofs where regular access is required.

6.3.4 Scaffolding

All employees and/or contractors involved in scaffolding and rigging work should hold the appropriate certificate of competency in accordance with national licensing requirements for persons performing high risk work.

6.3.5 Safety Harnesses and Anchor Points


Safety harnesses may not be used unless there is at least one other person at the workplace who has been trained and can perform a rescue if required. Safety harnesses and lanyards should comply with, be inspected in accordance with and be used in compliance with the relevant requirements of AS1891:2007 industrial fall-arrest systems and devices.

If required, the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** should contact the DEECD Regional OHS/WorkSafe Advisors or the OHS Advisory Service on 1300 074 715 for further information on the selection and use of fall arrest devices as a control measure.

6.3.6 Training

For employees who are required to work at height (i.e. maintenance personnel) the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** is to make sure that appropriate training is provided. This training is to include:

- Specific licensing and competency requirements e.g. scaffolding, fall arrest device, etc;
- The prevention of falls through safe systems of work;
- Reporting systems related to hazards, near misses and incidents;

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- The proper use, care and fitting of personal protective equipment;
- The proper use, care and storage of tools and equipment to be used;
- Emergency response procedures; and
- Safe methods of work related to working on brittle and fragile material.

Records of this training are to be recorded and maintained by the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** as outlined in the *Induction and Training Procedure*.

6.3.7 Reviewing Controls

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** is responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of controls in consultation with HSRs and employees. This review is to be documented on the *Task Based Risk Management Form*.

6.3.8 OHS Risk Register

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** is to make sure that the *OHS Risk Register* is kept up to date and is reviewed when working at height hazards are identified, assessed, controlled and reviewed.

7. Related Documentation:

Consultation and Communication Procedure
Induction and Training Procedure
OHS Risk Register
Permit to Work- Working at Heights
Risk Management Procedure
Safe Work Method Statement
Safe Work Procedure

8. Version Control

Version	Section Amended	Amendment	Date Created	Author
2	All	Modified procedure to reflect changes in the contractor management Procedure.	February 2011	EHU
3	All	Two yearly review as per OHSMS requirements. Some wording changes and additions that state that DEECD employees should not be working at a height unless their role requires them to do so i.e. maintenance personnel.	April 2011	EHU
4	All	Minor wording changes.	February 2012	EHU