

Managing the Risk of Falls Procedure

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INDEX

1. PURPOSE
2. RESPONSIBILITIES
3. DEFINITIONS
4. REFERENCES
5. PROCEDURE
6. RECORDS
7. REVIEW

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This procedure applies to all employees directly employed by Ecoplant & Seeddown and all Business Units and entities owned or managed by Ecoplant & Seeddown.
- 1.2. The purpose of this procedure is to detail the necessary measures that should be taken to ensure the safety of any Ecoplant & Seeddown employee who is required to work with a risk of falling. Falls are a major cause of death and serious injury. Fall hazards can be found at Ecoplant & Seeddown workplaces where work is carried out at height, for example using ladders or working on a roof, and also from ground level for example accessing service pits below.
- 1.3. Ecoplant & Seeddown has an obligation under Work Health and Safety Legislation and the Managing the Risk of Falls at Workplaces Code of Practice 2012 to minimise the incidence and severity of falls injuries by identifying, assessing and controlling the risk of a fall by a person from one level to another.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1. **Managers /Supervisors** of Ecoplant & Seeddown must:
 - ensure the appropriate education, training, equipment and other resources for the control of fall hazards is provided for all employees and others who may be exposed to fall hazards;
 - identify reasonably foreseeable hazards that could give rise to the risk of fall injuries;
 - eliminate the risk of falls so far as is reasonably practicable;
 - if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the risk – minimise the risk so far as is reasonably practicable by implementing control measures in accordance with the hierarchy of control;
 - maintain the implemented control measure so that it remains effective;
 - Review, and if necessary revise, risk control measures so as to maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a work environment that is without risks to health and safety;
 - ladders under their control are inspected regularly and before each use.
- 2.2. **Employee or any other person** in a Ecoplant & Seeddown workplace who is required to perform work at height must:
 - Must only use equipment that has been issued to them by their Manager/Supervisor. Importantly, persons undertaking work at height must not

use equipment that has not been specifically assigned for use by their Manager/Supervisor.

- Inspect equipment such as ladders and harnesses prior to each use.
- Perform work at heights in accordance with this procedure and any information, training or instruction they have received.
- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that they do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons.
- Must comply with any reasonable instruction and cooperate with any reasonable policy or procedure relating to health and safety at the workplace.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1. **Risk of fall** – Any circumstance that exposes an employee while at work, or other person while at or in the vicinity of a workplace, to a risk of a fall that is reasonably likely to cause injury to the employee or other person.

3.2. **Fall** – A fall by a person from one level to another.

3.3. **Fall Hazard** – A circumstance that exposes an employee performing Ecoplant & Seeddown work or other person in the vicinity of the activities, to a risk of a fall that is reasonably likely to cause injury to the employee or other person. This includes circumstances in which the employee/other person is:

- In or on plant or a structure that is at an elevated level;
- In or on plant that is being used to gain access to an elevated level;
- In the vicinity of an opening through which a person could fall;
- In the vicinity of an edge over which a person could fall;
- On or in the vicinity of a surface through which a person could fall; or
- On or near the vicinity of a slippery, sloping or unstable surface.

3.4. **Fall arrest system** – Equipment designed to prevent or reduce the severity of an injury to a person if a fall does occur, for example, catch platforms, industrial safety nets and safety harnesses.

3.5. **Passive fall prevention device** – Equipment designed to prevent a fall and which, after installation, does not require ongoing adjustment, alteration or operation by a person to the means by which it is designed to prevent a fall. These include installing edge protection, using temporary work platforms such as scaffolding and elevating work platforms, guard railing safety mesh.

- 3.6. **Work Positioning System** – System that involves the use of equipment, other than a temporary work platform, that enables a person or thing to be positioned and safely supported at a location for the duration of the work being carried out, for example, travel restraint systems and industrial rope access systems.
- 3.7. **Employee** – Any person who carries out work in any capacity for Ecoplant & Seeddown.
- 3.8. **Working at Heights** – Involves any activity or task conducted where there is a risk of a person or object falling, with particular attention when carried out:
- On any structure or plant being constructed or installed, demolished or dismantled, inspected, tested, repaired or cleaned;
 - On a fragile surface (e.g. cement sheeting roofs, rusty metal roofs, fibreglass sheeting roofs and skylights);
 - On a potentially unstable surface (e.g. areas where there is potential for ground collapse);
 - Using equipment to work at an elevated level (e.g. when using elevating work platforms or portable ladders);
 - On a sloping or slippery surface where it is difficult for people to maintain their balance (e.g. on glazed tiles);
 - Near an unprotected open edge (e.g. near incomplete stairwells); and
 - Near a hole, shaft or pit into which an employee could fall (e.g. trenches, lift shafts or service pits).

4. REFERENCES

- 4.1. Safety Policy
- 4.2. Relevant WHS legislation
- 4.3. Managing the Risk of Falls at Workplaces Code of Practice 2012
- 4.4. Hazard Identification and Risk Management Procedure
- 4.5. Incident Management Reporting and Investigation Procedure

5. PROCEDURE

5.1. Risk Control

Ecoplant & Seeddown shall, as far as is reasonably practicable, eliminate or control hazards in the workplace in accordance with the hierarchy of control.

Specific control measures relating to fall hazards are to be implemented in the following order:

- a) Ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that any work that may involve a fall hazard is carried out on the ground or on a solid construction;
- b) If a) is not reasonably practicable, then the risk must be minimised by using a passive fall prevention device;
- c) If a) and b) are not reasonably practicable, then the risk must be minimised using a work positioning system;
- d) If a), b) and c) are not reasonably practicable, then the risk must be minimised using a fall arrest system;
- e) If a), b), c) and d) are not reasonably practicable, then the risk must be minimised by implementing the following risk control measures:
 - Using a ladder;
 - An administrative control;
 - All other reasonably practicable risk control measures.

Risks associated with an object falling must be controlled by implementing one or more of the following risk control measures (in descending order of priority):

- Provision of a safe means of raising and lowering plant, material and debris;
- Provision of a secure physical barrier to prevent objects falling freely from one level to another;
- Use of personal protective equipment (PPE);
- Administrative controls;
- Other reasonably practicable risk control measures.

All plant/equipment used when working at heights shall comply with current Australian Standards and must have the relevant Australian Standard clearly marked on it. Relevant equipment (such as a safety harness) shall also be inspected prior to use to confirm it is in fit and proper condition and safe to use.

The appropriate Manager/Supervisor is responsible for undertaking risk assessments in their workplace. Refer to the Hazard Identification and Risk Management Procedure for more information on risk assessments.

5.2. Signage

For work carried out at height that poses a risk to people below from falling objects, access shall be restricted and as far as reasonably practicable barricaded. Signage shall be erected that clearly states: “Keep Clear – Working at Heights. Beware of Falling Objects”.

5.3. Training

Employees shall be provided with the information, training instruction and supervision necessary to protect them from risks to their health and safety for the type of working at heights activities they may be performing or supervising.

5.4. Emergency Response

Appropriate emergency and rescue procedures and facilities must be established, provided and tested to address fall hazards including:

- Emergency procedures relating to the use of risk control measures; and
- Procedures to rescue an employee who is exposed to a fall hazard and in need of emergency assistance.

When establishing emergency procedures, the following shall be taken into account:

- The type of plant and equipment being used, particularly elevated platform and knuckle booms;
- Location of the work area;
- Communication requirements;
- The type of rescue equipment available and capabilities of rescuers;
- Availability of local emergency services (if they are to be relied on for rescue).

5.5. Ladders

Working on ladders should be minimised and alternate methods introduced where possible and appropriate.

Where ladders must be used, the following requirements apply:

- A portable ladder used for Ecoplant & Seeddown work activities must be:
 - Australian Standard compliant (AS 1892);
 - Inspected regularly and before each use to ensure it is safe to be used;
 - Included/reviewed in the risk assessment of the project/task;
- An employee or other person setting up a ladder must ensure that it is:
 - suitable for the nature and duration of the work;
 - set up on a solid, stable and level surface;
 - secure to prevent slippage (e.g. secure top and bottom, on a '4:1 ratio' slope, stepladder spreaders locked in the fully opened position);
 - extended at least one metre above, and with edge protection, at the stepping off point when accessing a working platform or roof;

- away from traffic/access areas (e.g. driveways and doorways) unless appropriate protection/barricading is in place;
- clear of power lines so that the employee or the ladder cannot make contact; and
- away from the edge of an open floor/penetration;
- An employee or other person using a ladder must ensure that:
 - only one person is on the ladder at any given time;
 - materials or tools are not carried while climbing the ladder;
 - three points of contact are maintained and tools can be operated safely with one hand; and that
 - the user faces the ladder at all times, unless appropriate fall protection equipment is used in conjunction with the ladder.

5.6. Reporting Hazards or Injury

Employees must report any fall hazard to their Manager/Supervisor. Those hazards which cannot be immediately rectified, should be reported to the appropriate Manager or above in accordance with the Incident Management Reporting and Investigation Procedure.

The appropriate Manager/Supervisor must address any hazards and take corrective action, which may include reviewing work practices, arranging education or providing appropriate equipment for safe working at heights.

If an employee suffers injury, they must report the injury in accordance with the Incident Management Reporting and Investigation Procedure. The appropriate Manager/Supervisor or above must ensure the individual employee seeks medical advice immediately.

5.7. Training

Training in the type of control measures implemented should be provided during induction into a new job and as part of an ongoing working at heights /falls hazard risk control program. Training should be provided to:

- employees required to carry out, supervise or manage working at heights tasks;
- in-house designers, engineers and officers responsible for the selection and maintenance of plant and/or the design and organisation of the job/task; or
- any health and safety representatives.

The training should include information on:

- falls hazard risk management including the characteristics of working at heights;
- specific falls hazards and the measures in place to control them;
- how to perform working at heights tasks safely including the use of mechanical aids, tools, equipment and safe work procedures;
- How to report a problem or maintenance issue.

Training programs should be reviewed regularly and also when there is change to work processes, plant or equipment, implementation of new control measures, relevant legislation or other issues that may impact on the way the task is performed.

Records of induction and working at heights/falls training given to employees must be kept. The records can include information such as the date of the session, the topics dealt with, and the name and signature of the trainer and each of the employees who attended the session.

6. RECORDS

- 6.1. All documentation must be retained by the Company for a period not less than seven (7) years from the date that the documentation was brought into existence.

7. REVIEW

- 7.1. Annual