

INDUSTRY GUIDANCE – COMPETENT PERSON

Overview:

A competent person is a person who has acquired, through education, training, qualification or experience or a combination of these, the knowledge and skill enabling that person to perform the task required. When selecting personnel to operate, supervise, maintain, inspect, perform rescues, and transport MEWPs, it is essential to ensure they are appropriately trained, qualified, and experienced for their specific roles to maintain safety, compliance, and operational efficiency.

This guidance is provided to assist the PCBU (who is accountable) in identifying who they can deem a competent person. Evidence supporting a PCBU's identification of a competent person should be recorded.

Competent Operator of a MEWP

A competent person should:

- Be able to safely and correctly perform the tasks required of them.
- Be able to identify when they cannot perform a task due to insufficient knowledge or skill.
- Be able to communicate effectively.
- Be able to provide appropriate records of training, qualification and experience –
 - An employer or principal, who tells someone to use a MEWP, must make sure that the operator is adequately trained by a competent person and can demonstrate their competency before using any equipment.
 - The operator must get training on the type of MEWP they will be using.
 - The operator must be supervised during the training period until the person is considered competent to operate the MEWP.
- Be physically able to undertake the appointed tasks.
- Be able to identify and manage the risks of a task.
- Be able to recognize unsafe practices.
- Have the knowledge to assess a task and follow a work plan.
- Be able to recognize activities or tasks that lie outside their competence.
- Understand how the MEWP and its equipment are to be used safely.
- Know the risks of using a MEWP and the possible incidents that could occur.
- Know that the MEWP should not be used as a crane or personnel lift unless specifically designed for that purpose.
- Be able to implement the work plan and the rescue plan.
- Know the inspection and maintenance requirements to ensure the MEWP is in a suitable working condition, including pre-use checks.
- Know how to access the inspection and maintenance documentation, for example in the logbook.
- Be able to implement exclusion zones as necessary to keep the MEWP separate from pedestrians, machinery and vehicles.
- Know the requirements to operate near hazards, including power lines.

Competent person(s) for NZQA Unit Standard Training and Assessment on a MEWP:

In addition to the requirements of a competent operator, a competent person for training should

- Hold an NZQA Record of Achievement Summary showing the unit standards that Training/Assessing will be provided on.
- Hold Unit Standard 4098 'Use standards to assess candidate performance.
- Have at least 5 years' relevant industry experience.
- Be able to identify and manage the risks of a task associated with MEWP operation.
- Recognize and address unsafe practices in MEWP use and workplace environments.
- Have the knowledge to assess a task and follow a work plan.
- Maintain professional development by regularly attending industry updates, refresher courses and training workshops to stay current with best practices.
- Stay up to date with legislative and industry requirements through relevant, recent and concurrent experience.
- Be familiar with training documentation and compliance, ensuring proper completion, management, and assessment of training records in line with regulatory requirements.
- Understand adult learning principles to ensure engagement and retention of critical safety and operational information.
- Demonstrate instructional and coaching ability by effectively guiding and mentoring trainees in both theory and practical aspects of the specific MEWPs being trained on.
- Possess strong communication skills to clearly and effectively convey safety procedures, operational concepts, and best practices to trainees.
- Foster a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment that prioritises both trainee well-being and professional development.

Competent person(s) for Conducting Maintenance:

In addition to the requirements of a competent operator, a competent person for maintenance should

- Be familiar with the MEWP (its controls, functionality and operating limits)
- Be able to operate the equipment safely.
- Be able to understand the manufacturer's service and maintenance information.
- Have a suitable trade qualification or significant trade experience, such as (but not limited to), Automotive engineering, Automotive electrical, Diesel Mechanic or Hydraulics
- Be able to identify faults and defects.
- Be able to conduct functional checks and maintenance as defined by the manufacturer.
- Be able to verify if the MEWP is in a safe working condition.
- Know and understand the inspection requirements provided as set out in AS2550.10 and the Manufacturer's instructions.
- Be involved in continual education/professional industry development and training.
- Have the ability to be kept informed on updates from the industry, manufacturers, regulator and other bodies that influence their work.

Competent person(s) for Conducting Periodic Inspections (6 monthly inspections):

In addition to the requirements of a competent person conducting maintenance, a competent person for periodic inspections should:

- Know and understand the inspection requirements provided as set out in AS2550.10, AS/NZ1418.10 and the Manufacturer's instructions.
- Have their competency verified by CBIP for inspection or be able to display the same or a higher level of competence such as the EWPA Registered Inspector Program.

If the competent person is employed by a MEWP Manufacturer or Manufacturer's authorised dealer, they do not need to be registered with CBIP or RIP. However, they must demonstrate and be able to provide evidence that they are at the same, or higher levels of competency. Additionally, the Manufacturer or Manufacturer authorised dealer's employee is authorised to inspect only equipment that is directly manufactured and/or sold by the Manufacturer's authorised dealer. Evidence supporting a PCBU's identification of a competent person in this manner should be recorded.

Competent person(s) for Major Inspections (10-year inspection):

In addition to the requirements of a competent person for periodic inspections, a competent person for major inspections should

- Be able to either conduct or manage the major inspection, including coordinating appropriate trades and specialist services.
- Be able to identify faults and defects or to engage professional services to do so.
- Be able to assess and interpret specialized reports, such as a non-destructive testing (NDT) report.
- Know and understand the inspection requirements provided in the AS2550.10 document.
- Be able to conduct a risk assessment in accordance with AS/NZS 4024.1201 and AS/NZS 4024.1303.

Competent person(s) for Rescue:

In addition to the requirements of a competent operator, a competent person for rescues should:

- Be familiar with the specific MEWP (its ground and platform controls).
- Be knowledgeable about local regulations and standards regarding emergency procedures.
- Be able to understand the manufacturer's rescue and safety instructions and/or procedures.
- Be able to read and follow the company specific, documented rescue plan.
- Be able to assess the emergency situation, identify and avoid foreseeable hazards and determine an appropriate action to recover the platform.
- Be able to effectively communicate with the emergency team, operators and other personnel to coordinate the rescue operation.
- Be able to liaise with emergency services or instruction thereof, if required.
- Be physically capable of performing rescue tasks, using equipment and assisting individuals in distress.
- Be able to respond quickly and effectively during an emergency to eliminate or minimize risks and injuries.

Competent person(s) for Modifications:

In addition to the requirements of a competent person for maintenance, a competent person to perform modifications should:

- Be familiar with the requirements of AS/NZS 1418.10.
- Ensure that the manufacturer has agreed to the modifications, especially significant modifications that may affect the equipment's integrity or warranty.
- Be familiar with manufacturers specifications to ensure any modifications align with safety and operational standards.
- Have the ability to specify and conduct applicable testing.
- Have knowledge and practical experience of the operational risks associated with MEWPs.
- Have relevant qualifications for the task, e.g. qualifications from manufacturers of the specific MEWP being modified.

Competent person(s) for Loading and Unloading from Vehicles:

In addition to the requirements of a competent operator, a competent person for loading and unloading MEWPs from vehicles should:

- Have received specific training on safely loading and unloading MEWPs, including securing and stabilizing the equipment.
- Be familiar with the MEWP model being loaded or unloaded, including its weight, dimensions, and operating procedures.
- Be able to identify potential hazards, such as uneven surfaces, nearby traffic, or poor weather conditions.
- Be able to operate truck auxiliary equipment where necessary, used for loading the MEWP as appropriate e.g. Winch.
- Be able to select and operate equipment used for securing the MEWP as appropriate e.g. Chains, tie-downs.
- Be able to verify if the MEWP is in a safe condition for transportation.
- Be familiar with Load Restraint requirements.
- Have knowledge of the operational risks associated with MEWPs.
- Be able to implement exclusion zones as necessary to keep the MEWP separate from pedestrians, machinery and vehicles.
- Maintain communication with other workers involved in the process to coordinate movements and avoid accidents.
- Be aware of and comply with local regulations, such as road weight limits, load securing laws, height restrictions and health and safety standards.
- Be alert and in good physical condition to handle the demands of loading and unloading heavy machinery safely.

Competent person for Supervising Employees operating MEWPs:

Beyond the responsibilities outlined in the Supervisor's job description and standard company operating procedures, a Supervisor of MEWP operators should also possess knowledge and understanding of the following aspects related to MEWP operations:

- Be able to identify when operators cannot perform a task due to insufficient knowledge, skill and/or behaviours
- Be able to communicate effectively.
- Be able to provide appropriate records of training, qualification and experience - An employer or principal, who tells someone to use a MEWP, must make sure that the operator is adequately trained by a competent person and can demonstrate their competency before using any equipment. The operator must get training on the type of MEWP they will be using. The operator must be supervised during the training period until the person is considered competent to operate the MEWP.
- Be able to identify and manage the risks of a task.
- Be able to recognize unsafe practices.
- Have the knowledge to assess a task and follow a work plan.
- Be able to recognize activities or tasks that lie outside their competence.
- Understand how the MEWP and its equipment are to be used safely.
- Know the risks of using a MEWP and the possible incidents that could occur.
- Know that the MEWP should not be used as a crane or personnel lift unless specifically designed for that purpose.
- Be able to develop and implement the work plan and the rescue plan.
- Know the training and familiarisation required for the operator to use the MEWP.
- Know and understand the planning, set-up and operation requirements provided in this document.
- Be able to provide supervisory instruction, support and mentoring effectively.

References:

- AS2550:10, 1.4 Competent Person
- <https://www.worksafe.govt.nz/topic-and-industry/working-at-height/mobile-elevating-work-platforms/mobile-elevating-work-platforms/> - section 5
- silvercard.co.nz
- IPAF
- NZTA
- EWPA Registered Inspector Program