

## INDUSTRY GUIDANCE – USE OF A HARNESS ON SCISSOR LIFTS

### Overview:

All tasks involving a Mobile Elevating Work Platform (MEWP) must be properly planned, and a thorough risk assessment must be conducted prior to operation.

Scissor lifts are designed to lift people to a position where they can work at height safely within the platform. Operators and occupants must work inside guardrails and not reach or climb onto or over the rails. Workers need to keep both feet on the work platform.

The guardrails serve as the primary fall protection system on scissor lifts. Guardrails on platforms must be at least 950mm high, toe guards must be at least 100mm high and intermediate guardrails not further than 550mm from either guardrail or toe guards.

A harness is not normally required to be worn in a vertical lift (without a jib) MEWP, because; The risk of being ejected from the platform is considered low due to the minimal deflection of the extending structure, - there is no catapult effect.

Where an assessment determines that a fall hazard exists from a vertical lift (without a jib) MEWP, other than a boom type, and the use of a harness is the most suitable method of risk control, fall restraint harnesses incorporating a short lanyard should be used. When considering the use of a fall restraint harness in a MEWP, the possibility of introducing new risks should also be considered. Before starting work, a hazard assessment should be completed to include these new risks.

These risks include, but are not limited to:

- trip hazards and damage due to lanyards trailing on the floor of the platform;
- the need for occupants to move around a large platform requiring disconnection and reconnection from one anchorage point to another;
- occupants forgetting to disconnect from the anchorage point when exiting the platform;
- the potential to engage in unsafe behaviour, such as climbing and standing on the handrails, due to a perception of greater security;
- climbing and standing on the rails increases the risk of accidentally tipping over the scissor lift and can endanger the operator and anyone else in the area.

NOTE: Some MEWPs other than boom types may not be designed for use with a fall arrest system. An occupant falling from (for example) a scissor lift or vertical mast type MEWP while wearing a fall arrest type harness attached to a fall restraint only anchorage may be injured due to impact with or entanglement in the elevating structure. The arrest of the occupant's fall could also cause the MEWP to become unstable and possibly tip. Consult the operator's manual or the MEWP manufacturer to confirm the suitability of personal fall protection equipment types for each MEWP.

### References:

AS2550.10, 5.18.4 Other MEWP types (without boom or jibs)

AS/NZS1418.10, 2.5.4 Guardrails (protection) systems

WorkSafe NZ Best Practice Guideline for Mobile Elevating Work Platforms, 3.3 Use of harness systems