

# FACT SHEET

## SCAFFOLDING CONTROL MEASURES

### FOR BUILDERS, SUBCONTRACTORS AND DUTY HOLDERS

In 2009, the Heads of Workplace Safety Authorities (HWSA) conducted a national scaffolding campaign and found that only 59 per cent of all scaffolding across Australia complied with AS/NZS 1576 *Scaffolding* (parts 1 to 6). The campaign identified a number of safety issues and suggested a variety of control measures. The control measures outlined below are for builders, subcontractors and duty holders.

Regulations in each jurisdiction place general obligations on designers, manufacturers, suppliers, and hirers or lessors of plant – and employers who use the plant – to identify hazards associated with using the plant, and to assess and control the resulting risks. These regulations supplement the legislative requirements contained in acts relevant to each jurisdiction.

#### **Maintenance**

- A licensed scaffolder or a competent person with the skills and knowledge to inspect scaffolding should undertake regular inspections.
- Inspections should be based on the site conditions, nature of the work, and the risks associated with using the scaffolding.
- Use checklists to assist with inspection, and ensure consistency and compliance – see AS/NZS 4576 *Scaffolding – Appendix J*.
- Implement systems to report unsafe scaffolding, fix problems, and report potential alterations, such as ties and access.
- Ensure the scaffolding is safe before it is used.

#### **Alterations**

- Alterations to the scaffolding must be carried out by a licensed scaffolder, if a person or object could fall more than four metres. If the fall is less than four metres, alterations can be carried out by a competent person.
- The site controller must monitor the scaffolding needs of tradespeople – eg formworkers, bricklayers, roof workers, renderers, painters, plumbers – and ensure alterations are done promptly.

#### **Access**

- Consider access requirements at design stage.
- Install permanent, separate scaffolding access.
- Monitor access requirements as work progresses.

### **Footings, bracing and components**

- Ensure a handover certificate, scaffold tag or sign-off is provided for each scaffold (if the scaffolding is more than four metres high).
- A licensed scaffolder or competent person must inspect the footings, bracing and components before the scaffolding is used.

### **Ties**

- Ties must be inspected regularly by a licensed scaffolder or a competent person.
- Prevent scaffolding from being used until ties have been installed as per the supplier's, manufacturer's or site-specific engineering requirements.
- If the scaffolding requires any alterations, ensure ties and other components are relocated before work begins, as required.

### **Site induction**

- Include scaffolding as part of the site induction.
- Outline the process if users want scaffolding to be altered.
- Outline the process for users to report unsafe scaffolding.
- Outline the consequences if unauthorised alterations are made to the scaffolding – eg falls, instability, collapse.

### **Overhead powerlines**

- Ensure that the power supply has been de-energised or isolated before erecting, altering or dismantling the scaffolding.

### **Suspended scaffolding**

- Obtain information from suppliers, manufacturers and/or designers regarding counter weights, and collect all drawings and engineers' certificates.
- Do not use suspended scaffolding that does not comply with the supplier's, manufacturer's or site-specific engineering requirements.
- Do not move or remove counter weights.
- Ensure daily inspections are undertaken on suspended scaffolding, including the counter weights.
- Use a suspended scaffolding checklist to record inspections and ensure consistency.
- Ensure only advanced licensed scaffolders or riggers, with suspended scaffolding experience, erect, move or alter suspended scaffolding.
- Site controllers must ensure unauthorised access is prohibited.

### **Cradle**

- Once erected, ensure a licensed scaffolder or rigger inspects the scaffolding.
- Get a handover certificate, scaffolding tag or sign-off from the scaffolder.
- Ensure inspections are undertaken daily, by a competent person.
- Stop work immediately if safety issues are identified.

### **Training**

- Scaffolders must have a licence to perform high-risk work.
- Those working on suspended scaffolding must have training in its safe use.

## Further information

- AS/NZS 1576 *Scaffolding*
- AS 4576 *Guidelines for scaffolding*
- AS 1577 *Scaffold planks*

Contact your safety authority for more information.



## Disclaimer

This publication may contain occupational health and safety and workers compensation information. It may include some of your obligations under the various legislations that WorkCover NSW administers. To ensure you comply with your legal obligations you must refer to the appropriate legislation.

Information on the latest laws can be checked by visiting the NSW legislation website ([www.legislation.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au)).

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