



Mobile Access Towers and Platforms Standards

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1. Introduction

The purpose of these mobile access towers and platforms (mobile towers) standards is to ensure that when work at height is carried out using a mobile access tower and platform it is only done so where it has been identified via a working at height assessment and only erected and dismantled by a competent person.

Mobile towers, also commonly known as tower scaffolds are usually used for out of sequence or repair work or used when it is not practicable to install a scaffold.

They must only be erected and disassembled by trained operatives and they must hold a Prefabricated Access Suppliers and Manufacturers Association (PASMA) qualification. The mobile tower selected must be suitable for the job in hand following a work at height risk assessment.

Site management must check the operative erecting the tower is PASMA qualified prior to them erecting. A copy of their PASMA card should be taken and added to the individuals induction file.

Those using mobile towers should also be trained in the potential dangers and precautions required during use.

Mobile tower provision and use must be properly managed, ensuring that the manufacturer's handbook is on site and there is an adequate inspection regime.

2. Erection and dismantling

The manufacturer, supplier or hirer has a duty to provide an instruction manual explaining the erection sequence, including any bracing requirements.

Mobile towers should be erected following a safe method of work, either using:

Advance guard rail system

Where temporary guard rail units are locked in place from the level below and moved up to the platform level. They are in place before the operator accesses the platform to fit the permanent guard rails.

'Through-the-trap' (3T)

Involves the operator taking up a working position in the trap door of the platform, from where they can add or remove the components which act as the guard rails on the level above the platform. It is designed to ensure that the operator does not stand on an unguarded platform.

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3. Stability

To maintain mobile tower stability the installer must make sure:

- The mobile tower is resting on firm, level ground with the locked castors or base plates properly supported. Never use bricks or building blocks to take the weight of any part of the tower;
- The stabilisers or outriggers are installed when required by the instruction manual;
- That a mobile tower is never erected to a height above that recommended by the manufacturer.

4. Precautions and inspection

Mobile towers must comply with the standards required for all types of scaffolds, e.g. double guardrails, toe boards, bracing and access ladder.

When the mobile tower is purchased or hired it should arrive with all the necessary components to prevent falls and ensure stability.

Mobile towers rely on all parts being in place to ensure adequate strength. They can collapse if sections are left out.

All mobile towers must be inspected following assembly and then at suitable regular intervals by a competent person. In addition, if the tower is used for construction work and a person could fall 2 metres or more from the working platform, then it must be inspected following assembly and then every 7 days. Work must be stopped if the inspection shows it is not safe to continue and put right any faults.

The result of an inspection should be recorded on the scaffold inspection report form and every 7 days where appropriate.

Refer to HSMS form [019A](#) – Scaffold Inspection Register

5. Using and moving

Make sure everyone involved is aware of, and follows, these simple rules:

Using

Never use a tower:

- In strong winds;
- As a support for ladders, trestles or other access equipment;
- With broken or missing parts; or
- With incompatible components.

Moving

When moving a tower you should **always**:

- Reduce the height to a maximum of 4m;
- Check that there are no power lines or other obstructions overhead;
- Check that the ground is firm, level and free from potholes; and
- Push or pull using manual effort from the base only.

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Never move a tower while people or materials are on the tower, or in windy conditions.

6. **Monitoring**

Site management monitors the safe use of mobile towers via daily site checks. The Group HS&E Department monitors compliance with these standards via regular site HS&E inspections.

7. **Further Reading**

<https://pasma.co.uk/>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/scaffold.htm>

8. **Tool Box Talk**

Refer to HSMS [TBT](#) – W@H Mobile Access Towers and Platforms

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