



# Working at Height Mobile Access Towers & Platforms

**Audience:** Site Operatives, Customer Care Operatives

**Presenter:** GHSEA, Site Manager, Trade Supervisors



## When to Use Mobile Access Towers & Platforms

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

They must only be erected and dismantled 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. It may also be appropriate to discuss requirements with the supplier (if appropriate).



## Erection and dismantling

Always use the instructions supplied by the manufacturer, supplier or hirer.

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

### **Advance guard rail system**

Where temporary guard rails 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.



## 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;
- Any stabilisers or outriggers are used in line with the erection instructions;
- That a mobile tower is never erected to a height above that recommended by the erection instructions.
- The area is free from obstructions, especially overhead power lines.
- That the Safe Working Load is never exceeded.



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## Precautions and inspection

When the mobile tower is purchased or hired it should arrive with all the necessary components to prevent falls and ensure stability. Always check that component parts are complete and free from damage (use instructions).

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, when due to work from a mobile tower or platform ask the site manager to confirm that the tower is in date for inspection.



## Using and moving

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

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.

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.

**Never move a tower if individuals or materials are on the tower, or in windy conditions.**