



Document Type	Procedure
Document ID	WHS PR 2.52
Document Circulation	Internal

WORKING AT HEIGHTS PROCEDURE

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1 Purpose

This procedure defines Bethanie’s minimum requirements to prevent or provide protection against falls from height or any person from being struck by falling objects, from any height.

2 Scope and Applicability

Who must use this procedure:	All Bethanie workers, which includes employees, volunteers, contractors and sub-contractors. Students, apprentices and labour hire workers will also be required to reasonably comply with this procedure.
Why this procedure is important:	This procedure outlines working at height requirements across Bethanie.
When this procedure applies:	This procedure applies in all Bethanie workplaces and any other location that workers are undertaking work on behalf for Bethanie.
Who to ask for more information:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your Manager • Work, Health and Safety Team

3 Definitions

Term	Definition
Barricade	Any barrier such as a fence, rigid hand-railing etc.
Competent Person	A person assessed as competent for the tasks they shall perform and who has acquired, through training, qualification or experience or a combination of those things, the knowledge and skills required to perform the required task competently
Solid construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is structurally capable of supporting workers, material and any other loads applied to it • Is provided with protection around its perimeter and around all open penetrations from or through which workers could fall • Has an even, accessible surface and gradient • Allows workers to enter and leave the work area safely
Fall Arrest	Any device or system that prevents a person from falling from height and striking the ground or lower-level structure
Fall Prevention	Any device or system that eliminates the risk of a fall from height, enabling a person to move safely to and from the workplace.
Fall Restraint	Devices used to constrain a person including harnesses, waist belts and lanyards that restrict a person from reaching a fall situation
Rescue Plan	The document developed as part of the working at height (WAH) permitting process prior to work commencing, considering:



Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The immediate response after a fall has occurred (by the Spotter / Standby Person) • The equipment required to initiate the emergency response • Emergency Contact numbers
Responsible Person	The person who has been deemed competent to Work At Height and is accountable for work to be performed.
Spotter / Standby Person	The person who is accountable for watching Work At Height from a safe location, ensuring people Working at Height are not exposed to unseen hazards and implementing the emergency action / Rescue Plan when a Work At Height incident occurs.
Work At Height (WAH)	Any work that has the potential to cause harm as the result of people or equipment falling from one level to another.

4 Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Managers and supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are responsible for consulting with contractors undertaking any work at heights and ensuring systems are as safe as reasonably practicable, considering the safety of the contractors, workers, customers and others who may be impacted. • May be required to acknowledge that work is being undertaken through the contractors job safety analysis, permit to work process, risk assessment or similar and to reasonably confirm that safety and work systems appear reasonable considering the task and associated hazards. • Escalate any concerns to the contractor on site as soon as possible. • Where safety concerns are identified, instruct the contractor to cease works immediately until concerns can be appropriately addressed and resolved.
All employees and volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully cooperate to achieve the requirements of this procedure. • Comply with instructions given by Bethanie for their own health and safety or the health and safety of other persons. • Report any safety concerns as soon as possible.
Contractors, sub-contractors and employees of contractors and subcontractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have completed a RIIWHS204 or CPCCCM2010B Work safely at heights training course before inspecting working at height equipment, working at height or spotting for working at height activities. • Complete a risk assessment of the works, developing and documenting a safe method of completing the works. • Consult with the business area manager to ensure they are aware the works are being completed, discuss safety



	<p>measures in place and any requirements for the manager to be aware of.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducting the works safely for all persons involved or within the vicinity.
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5 General

Prior to conducting any work at height, consideration must be given to the possibility and feasibility of carrying out the work by alternate methods to eliminate or minimise the need to WAH. For example, assembly of any structure or equipment at or on ground level or using long handled equipment for high reach.

Bethanie employees are permitted to perform only low-risk maintenance tasks at height, using small step ladders, such as changing light globes or cleaning walls or low ceilings.

Any other working at heights tasks should be conducted by qualified and competent contractors with the appropriate skills, experience, equipment and expertise to safely undertake the works in consultation with the business area manager.

6 Ladders

Manual handling activities from portable ladders will be permitted on site only when deemed by risk assessment that the risk of falling is low, the ladder length is under 2 metres, the area is free of hazards and where three points of contact can be maintained.

Freestanding any higher than three rungs from the top of the ladder is not permitted.

6.1 Ladder Selection

- Portable ladder selection, care and use should comply with Australian Standards (AS/NZS 1892.) and have a clearly displayed load rating of at least 120 kg.
- Metal ladders must not be used where electricity is or could be present. Only fibreglass ladders constructed to Australian Standards for use with electricity can be used.
- Metal ladders must be fitted with rubber feet or a similar non-slip material.
- Portable platform ladders must be fitted with fully enclosed railings to prevent people from falling off the platform.

6.2 Ladder Inspection

A thorough ladder inspection should also be made:

- When first brought into service
- Before use, and
- After any drops or impacts.

Particular attention should be made for internal corrosion and rung tread.

6.3 Ladder Set-up

When setting up a ladder the following must be considered:

- Only be placed on firm, stable level surfaces;
- A clear landing space must be provided at the head and the base of the ladder;



- The task can be performed safely; and
- The platform step / portable ladder is the appropriate size for the task.

When setting up a ladder do not place it:

- Against a windowpane or sash;
- Against unsecured backing;
- Next to electrical wiring or operational piping;
- In front of a door, unless the door is locked, blocked, or guarded; and
- The adjustment of portable extension ladder must be done only by the ladder's users and when standing at the ladder's base.

Fixed ladders mounted on infrastructure are not to be used to perform work or maintenance activities. These are for access to and from walkways and platforms only.

7 Working at Height

Working at heights must consider the risk of a fall from one level to another, that is reasonably likely to cause injury.

High risk work includes situations where there is potential to fall from one level to another, that is reasonably likely to cause an injury, or when work needs to be performed near an open edge. These high risk tasks must be risk assessed and be undertaken by a contractor with appropriate equipment, skills and experience. Experienced contractors should ensure safe work instructions and an emergency management plan.

No person shall work at height with an appropriate rescue plan. The rescue plan shall specifically consider the rescue requirements for a person who falls and remains restrained in a harness at height to ensure the person is suspended for the shortest possible duration (<5mins) prior to rescue

7.1 Risk Assessment

Any person working at heights must conduct a thorough risk assessment to identify potential hazards associated with working at height.

This should include:

- The potential of objects and / or persons to fall;
- Working surface (width, fragile material);
- Consideration of other work occurring simultaneously in adjacent areas to the work at height;
- Proximity to high hazards such as overhead electrical distribution lines;
- The potential for weather or other external conditions to impact on the work at height (e.g. wind, rain, dust, temperature, lightning, etc.);
- Selection and availability of appropriate equipment;
- Selection of anchor and / or tie off points;
- Condition of supporting structures i.e. tie off points;
- Fall clearances, i.e. length of lanyard + tear-out distance + height of user + safety margin;
- Rescue in the event of a fall and the preparation of a recovery; and
- The likelihood of objects / tools being used left in the work situation on completion of the work.



Persons required to work at height where a safe work platform and or edge protection is not in place must always be attached to a secure anchor.

7.2 Preventing Falls

The erection or use of work platforms, guard rails or safety mesh shall always be considered first when putting in place control measures for any identified fall hazards.

7.2.1 Work Platforms

A work platform is designed to prevent workers from falling, provide a safe working area and include:

- Scaffolds;
- Elevating work platforms (EWP);
- Workboxes;
- Building maintenance units; or
- Any other platform that provides a working area and is designed to prevent a fall.

Scaffolding must be installed and tagged as 'in service' by a licenced scaffold installer.

7.2.2 Perimeter Guard Rails

Temporary or permanent guard rails may be used to provide effective fall protection:

- At the edges of roofs;
- At the edges of walkways, stairways, ramps, landings and mezzanine floors;
- On top of plant and structures where access is required;
- Around openings in floor and roof structures; and
- At the edges of shafts, pits and other excavations.

Guard rails should incorporate a top rail 900mm to 1100mm above the working surface, a mid-rail and a toe / kick board.

7.2.3 Safety Mesh

Safety mesh is designed to prevent internal falls through a roof or fragile surface with a void below. If securely fixed, safety mesh provides long term fall protection for maintenance and repair workers.

7.2.4 Fall Restraint and Fall Arrest

Fall restraint and fall arrest systems consists of tethering the worker between an anchor point and a worn harness with:

- Fall restraint prevents a person going over an open edge; and
- Fall arrest allows a person to fall a short distance before the system halts the fall under control.

Fall arrest must only be used when fall restraint cannot be used.

All equipment used for fall arrest should be designed, manufactured, selected and used in compliance with AS1891 series of standards.



7.3 Fall Prevention Equipment

Prior to use all fall prevention equipment and systems are to be inspected for any damage by the person who will be using it.

Additional specialist inspections are also required at regular intervals and inspection tags displaying the name of the inspector, date of next required inspection and other relevant details to be attached to the equipment.

7.4 Protection of Persons Below

Signage must always be displayed, and suitable exclusion zone clearly marked while any person is working at height in areas where persons are / or could be below.

8 Consequences of Procedural Breach

- This procedure is binding on Bethanie workers including contractors, as per Section 1: Scope and Applicability.
- Roles and Responsibilities in relation to this procedure are set out in Section 4.
- Failure to comply with the procedure may constitute a breach of the Bethanie Code of Conduct and business practices.

9 Related Documents

Legislation
<i>Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022</i>
<i>WorkSafe WA Code of Practice. Prevention of Falls at Workplaces</i>
Procedure and Support Documents i.e. internal Guidelines or Forms
WHS Framework
Contractor Safety Policy
Standards
Strengthened Aged Care Standard 2: The organisation
Strengthened Aged Care Standard 4: The environment
References
AS/NZS 1891 Industrial fall-arrest systems and devices
AS/NZS 1892.1 Portable ladders - Metal
AS/NZS 1892.5 Portable ladders - Selection, safe use and care

10 Document Control

Approved by	Operational Leadership Team	Next Review	November 2028
Document Owner or Author	GM WHS	Review Cycle	3 years
Version Number	1.1	Version Date	November 2025
Description of Change	Procedure updated with the transition back to internal maintenance and contractor management		
Positions Consulted	Property Operations, Procurement, WHS, Steering Committee for Grounds, Gardens and Maintenance, A E Hoskins.		
Key Words	Ladder, fall, harness, fall arrest, anchor point, guard rails, platform, work positioning, safety mesh, heights, working at heights.		
Previous Versions	Description of Changes	Position	Date
1.0	Consolidated procedure based on historical Maintenance procedures	GM - WHS	July 2025