# Purpose

The purpose of this standard is to provide a Wannon Water framework and guidance for the management of Working at Heights (Falls Prevention) to reduce the risks to our employees, contractors, the environment, and the public, as far as reasonably practicable, and to ensure compliance with legislative obligations.

For any situation or task that involves the potential for a person to fall from any height, hazards must be identified and controlled. Falls even from a small height can, in some circumstances, result in serious injury or fatality, and don’t only occur from above ground structures, such as roofs, but also down voids, such as wells, pits and shafts.

Working in these environments where we’re presented with different levels of risks must be managed effectively to prevent adverse impact to our Strategic Direction and support our **Zero Harm** aspiration.

# Scope

This framework applies to:

* Any employee or contractor engaged in our activities, planned or unplanned, involving Working at Heights on our behalf.
* Any works where the fall is potentially > 2 metres but can be used for guidance when there is a potential to fall lesser distances.

**Out of scope**

* When a principal contractor has been granted formal possession of a site whilst carrying out contracted work, it is the responsibility of the principal contractor to comply with the relevant regulations and consult with our Engaging Officer to determine if their activities pose a risk to us.
* *Cranes and Lifting Operations* used to lift objects other than people.

# Standard requirements

| **Requirements** | **Responsibility[[1]](#footnote-2)** | **Accountability[[2]](#footnote-3)** |
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| Assets, plant and equipment purchased, including safety equipment, used for working at heights (particularly falls) must:   * Comply with Australian Standards[[3]](#footnote-4) * Be installed and used as per the manufacturer’s instructions. * Be inspected and maintained. * Be fit for purpose, and; * Be appropriate for the full duration of the task. | **Executive People & Resilience**  BM Asset Creation  BM Maintenance  BM Operations | GM People & Business Services |
| Equipment used for working at height/falls prevention must be used and maintained (e.g., inspected, serviced, and repaired) in line with manufacturer’s recommendations as a minimum. | BM Asset Systems  BM Asset Creation  BM Operations  BM Maintenance | GM Assets & Service Delivery |
| Tasks involving working at height/falls prevention must be completed in accordance with our procedures (e.g., ***Working from Heights*** *(****Falls Prevention) Procedure,*** Task Risk Assessment (JSA) or equivalent system[[4]](#footnote-5)). | **Executive People & Resilience**  BM Asset Creation  BM Maintenance  BM Operations | GM People & Business Services |
| When a task involves the potential[[5]](#footnote-6) to fall > 2 metres, a **Task Risk Assessment (JSA) eForm** must be completed prior to performing the task – with records kept. | **Executive People & Resilience**  BM Asset Creation  BM Maintenance  BM Operations | GM People & Business Services |
| Risks associated with working at height/falls prevention, where there is a potential to fall > 2 metres, must be identified and assessed[[6]](#footnote-7) by a qualified person and the hierarchy of control must be used where reasonably practicable to control the risks to our accepted levels as follows:   * Eliminate (e.g., doing groundwork or solid construction) * Substitute (e.g., drone use to do clear water storage inspections) * Isolate (e.g., use permanent railings). * Engineer (e.g.,   + Passive fall prevention device (e.g., temporary EWP, guard railing, portable safety barriers, safety grates or roof safety mesh)   + Work positioning system (e.g., harness & lanyard connected to a fixed anchor point or portable davit).   **Note**: This system must be set up to prevent users reaching the edge)   * + Fixed or portable ladder) * Administrate (e.g., use of safety signs) * Use of PPE (e.g., fall arrest system – safety harness or inertia reel system).   **Note**: Fall arrest systems must only be used if it is not reasonably practicable to use higher-level control measures described. | **Executive People & Resilience**  BM Asset Creation  BM Maintenance  BM Operations | GM People & Business Services |
| PPE must be identified, provided, used correctly (e.g., fitted), and maintained (e.g., cleaned and stored) – in accordance with the standards described in the **PPE Procedure**.  If a hard hat is worn, then it must be fitted with a chin strap. | **Executive People & Resilience**  All BM | GM People & Business Services |
| Any fixed ladder with a fall > 3 metres must have access prevention (e.g., cover plate with a lock). | **Executive People & Resilience**  BM Asset Systems  BM Asset Creation  BM Maintenance  BM Operations | GM People & Business Services |
| All fixed ladders and their platforms must have fall protection controls installed which meet the requirements described in the **Working at Heights (Falls Prevention) Procedure** (e.g., use of ladder cages, fall arrest systems, minimum landing distances where dismounting to a platform) | **BM Asset Planning**  BM Asset Creation  BM Asset Systems  BM Maintenance  BM Operations | GM Assets & Service Delivery |
| Portable ladders must only be used if load rating can be met.  Any portable ladders used must be in a good condition and fit for purpose/suitable for use (e.g., fiberglass construction for electrical work, consideration of chemicals being used, hot work, etc.). | **Executive People & Resilience**  BM Asset Creation  BM Maintenance  BM Operations | GM People & Business Services |
| A minimum of two people must be in attendance when using personal fall protection or ladders where there is a risk of falls > 2 metres. | BM Asset Creation  BM Maintenance  BM Operations | GM Assets & Service Delivery |
| Where anchor points are permanently installed signage must be displayed as per legislative requirements. | **Executive People & Resilience**  BM Asset Systems  BM Asset Creation  BM Maintenance  BM Operations | GM People & Business Services |
| All permanently installed anchor points must be inspected/tested/assessed every 12 months by a height safety equipment inspector, or as per the manufacturer’s recommendations to a maximum of every 5 years – with records kept. | **Executive People & Resilience**  BM Asset Systems  BM Asset Creation  BM Maintenance  BM Operations | GM People & Business Services |
| Plant and equipment to manage the risk of falls must be used/worked on by persons who are trained, competent and hold the appropriate qualifications and licences where required by legislation (e.g., licenced scaffold erector is mandatory if working > 4 metres, licenced operator for Elevated Work Platform classes defined in OHS Regulations). | **Executive People & Resilience**  BM Asset Creation  BM Maintenance  BM Operations | GM People & Business Services |
| Where there is a need to use hand tools these must be secured to a tool belt or lanyard and other tools kept in a toolbox to avoid any risks of tripping and/or objects falling from heights. | BM Asset Creation  BM Maintenance  BM Operations | GM Assets & Service Delivery |
| All maintenance activities and any faulty or damaged assets, plant or equipment must be managed in accordance with the **Lockout Tagout Standard and Procedure**. | **Executive People & Resilience**  All BM | GM People & Business Services |
| A plan must be in place for the management of an emergency where there is a risk of a fall (e.g., rescue and first aid).  The **Confined Spaces Standard and Procedure** and the **Working at Heights (Falls Prevention) Procedure** mustoutline specific rescue requirements. | **Executive People & Resilience** | GM People & Business Services |
| Raise a **Hazard Report** where there is a concern that we have faulty or damaged assets, plant and/or equipment (e.g., frayed lanyards, broken safety barriers) associated with Working at Heights (Falls Prevention) which could result in potential harm to health. | **Executive People & Resilience**  All BM | GM People & Business Services |
| Raise an **Incident Report** for any event involving falls from Working at Heights. | **Executive People & Resilience**  All BM | GM People & Business Services |
| Confirmed or suspected notifiable incidents involving working at heights must be investigated, reported, and managed in accordance with the **Incident Response and Reporting Procedure** to ensure legislative requirements are met (e.g., fall from a height from any plant, substance, or thing - a WorkSafe notifiable event). | **Executive People & Resilience** | GM People & Business Services |

# Training, Competence, and Awareness

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| **Standards** | **Responsibility** | **Accountability** |
| All managers with Responsibilities & Accountabilities within this document must be made aware of this standard. | Executive People & Resilience | GM People & Business Services |

# Monitoring

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| **Standards** | **Responsibility** | **Accountability** |
| Compliance with and effectiveness of this standard  must be verified at least every four years by including periodic audits in the **Audit Program**. | Executive People & Resilience | GM People & Business Services |
| All records required by this standard must be maintained in our records management system – **(CM)**. | Information Services Manager | Chief Information Officer |

# Definitions

| **Term** | **Means** |
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| CM | Content Manager |
| EWP (Elevated Work Platform) | A mobile device used to support a platform on which persons, equipment and materials may be elevated to perform work, and consists of a work platform with controls, an extending structure, and a chassis. |
| Fall | In OHS Regulations, a fall is an involuntary fall of more than 2 metres. |
| Fall arrest | Fall arrest systems are designed to stop a worker or materials that have fallen off an edge from hitting the level or ground below. |
| Inertia Reel | Devices designed for fall prevention, with a quick-activating braking system to ensure the fall is limited to a few centimetres and fall arrest forces are reduced. |
| Passive Fall Prevention Device / Fall Restraint | A passive fall prevention or restraint device is material or equipment, or a combination of both, that are designed for the purpose of preventing a fall and that, after initial installation does not require any ongoing adjustment, alteration, or operation by any person to ensure the integrity of the device to perform its function i.e., fall restraint physically stops a worker from falling. |
| Portable Davit System | A portable lightweight anchor device that can be used in fall-arrest systems and rescues either after a fall or for an emergency escape from a dangerous situation. |
| PPE | Personal Protective Equipment is equipment and clothing used as personal protection against potential hazards, risks, or injuries in the workplace or environment. |
| Work Positioning System | A work positioning system uses equipment that allows an individual to work while being supported by a harness in tension that prevents a fall from occurring. |
| Task Risk Assessment (JSA) | Job Safety Analysis Procedure and eForm |

# Governance

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| **Parent policy / standard** | * Zero Harm Policy |
| **Associated procedures / standards** | * Working at Heights (Falls Prevention) Procedure * Confined Spaces Standard & Procedure * Task Risk Assessment (JSA) Procedure/eForm * Hazard Reporting Procedure * Incident Reporting and Response Procedure * Lockout Tagout Standard & Procedure * PPE Procedure |
| **Legislation mandating compliance** | * Victorian Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004 * Victorian Occupational Health & Regulations 2017 - Part 3.5 – Prevention of Falls * WorkSafe Victoria Publication: Prevention of Falls in General Construction - Compliance Code * WorkSafe Victoria WorkSafe Victoria Publication: Elevating Work Platforms Industry Standard * WorkSafe Victoria Publication: Prevention of Falls in Construction - Selection and Safe Use of Portable Ladders * Australian Standards |
| **Approval** | Executive Committee |
| **Owner** | GM People & Business Services |
| **Content enquiries** | Safety Field Officer |

# Document version history

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| --- | --- |
| **Version** | **Changes made to document** |
| 1 | New document created as part of the new IMS Standard Framework. |
| 2 | Re-worded Section 2 Out of scope: from “has taken legal ownership of a site” to “has been granted formal possession of a site”. |

1. The nominated person who is responsible for ensuring there is the system in place to meet a requirement (title in bold) or delivering a task to an acceptable level of performance. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The Executive are collectively accountable for the standard. The individual GM is the nominated person who will approve any capital / operating expense requests (within the Instrument of Delegation) and any material changes to current WW work practices to meet requirements of the standard. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. If equipment is manufactured internationally – the manufacturer or supplier must be consulted for assurance that the item complies with relevant Australian Standards [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. For contractors, an equivalent system (e.g., **Safe Work Procedure**, **JSA**, **SWMS**) must be of equivalent or higher standard. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Examples where there is not a potential for a fall include work behind fixed barriers or guard rails, work where safety grates are in place over pits. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Reassessment can be requested by a [HSR](https://m.enviroessentials.com.au/safetylaw/victoria/requirement/81414/)if they believe the employer has failed to assess the risks appropriately, after either an incident, alteration to an asset or a task, or where there is concern that the measures do not adequately control the risks or for any other reason. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)