

Carry out aerial rescue operations

Overview

This standard covers carrying out aerial rescue operations. It includes the accessing of trees by climbing (using both ladders and climbing equipment) or by Mobile Elevated Work Platform (MEWP), to carry out rescues in a variety of contexts (e.g. pruning operations, cutting, dismantling or rigging). The aerial rescues include recovery of both conscious and unconscious casualties.

When carrying out an aerial rescue you must maintain high standards of health and safety at all times for both yourself and the people you will come into contact with.

When working with machinery you need to be appropriately trained, and hold current certification where required, in line with relevant legislation.

Your work must conform to all relevant legislation and codes of practice when carrying out this work.

This standard is only suitable for those who are already competent in climbing trees and/or using a MEWP.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. assess the risks associated with the site and the proposed work
2. select and implement the appropriate working methods, in accordance with the assessed risks
3. select and use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for the work
4. maintain effective teamwork when working with others to carry out aerial rescue operations
5. communicate clearly and effectively with all persons involved in the aerial rescue operations
6. assess the individual and any injuries that may have occurred
7. assess the rescue situation and any hazards entailed in the aerial rescue, according to the available information
8. formulate a plan for the aerial rescue operation, selecting access and rescue methods which are safe, appropriate to the situation and in line with relevant industry guidance and codes of practice
9. select, prepare and use appropriate tools and equipment, safely and effectively
10. confirm all equipment has been checked and is fit for purpose
11. carry out the aerial rescue operations plan and rescue the casualty from the tree
12. on reaching the casualty, administer the appropriate first aid, based on your assessment of their condition and your training
13. bring the casualty to the ground and continue with first aid as necessary until the emergency services can take over
14. record details of the incident clearly and accurately
15. report the incident in line with relevant company policies and legal requirements
16. maintain the health and safety of yourself and others at all times, in accordance with relevant legislation

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. how to identify hazards and assess risks
2. how to interpret risk assessments
3. the selection, use and care of personal protective equipment (PPE)
4. how to plan the aerial rescue operation and the key elements that need to be included
5. the emergency planning and procedures used for the aerial rescue operation
6. how to initiate the emergency plan
7. how to assess the main hazards in the tree and in the surrounding area and the operational difficulties in carrying out the aerial rescue
8. how to resolve the operational difficulties in carrying out the aerial rescue
9. how to assess the situation and the needs of the casualty and decide if the emergency services are required
10. the rescue methods required appropriate to a range of possible situations including having a conscious or unconscious casualty
11. the types of tools and equipment required and how to maintain and use these safely and effectively in line with the manufacturer's recommendations
12. the legal requirements for checking equipment
13. how to carry out an aerial rescue operation using methods involving casualty's and rescuer's lines, and rescuer's line only, in different situations
14. the situations when aerial rescue by climbing may not be the most appropriate method
15. how the species and condition of trees will affect rescues
16. how to initiate and maintain effective communication during the aerial rescue with the following: the casualty, work colleagues, the general public and the emergency services
17. how to carry out an aerial rescue using a Mobile Elevated Work Platform (MEWP) and the implications of the safe working load (SWL) limit on the rescue
18. the basic principles of first aid and how they may be applied, according to your own level of training
19. the importance of evaluating the actions taken when carrying out aerial rescue operations
20. the importance of checking how well you worked with others to carry out aerial rescue operations
21. your responsibilities under relevant environmental and health and safety legislation

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Scope/range

Carry out the following by climbing, by using a MEWP or both:

- rescue of a conscious victim
- rescue of an unconscious victim
- rescue of a victim near the main stem of the tree
- rescue of a victim in the crown away from main stem
- rescue of a victim from a pole
- rescue an injured Mobile Elevated Work Platform operator
- use of a two- or more person rescue team

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