10. Scaffolding

Scaffolding elevates workers to a height that can be fatal should the worker fall, or from where dropping tools or materials can cause serious harm to those below. The building, usage and maintenance of scaffolds is therefore an important aspect to consider in the safe running a fabrication site.

1) Work at a height of more than 1.8 meters (6 ft.) requires either a fixed platform with railing, approved scaffolding, or the use of approved personal fall protection systems secured to an appropriate anchoring point. Where practical, the preference is to work from a platform (fixed or scaffolding) with protection in place such that additional fall arrest Personal Protective Equipment is not required.

2) Scaffolds are built, maintained, modified as specified by recognized international standards. Site Management is required to provide engineering specifications for scaffolding design and use, as well as set frequency of inspections.

3) Large scaffolds (over 38 meters/125 feet high), all hanging and suspended scaffolds, and scaffolds built for non-standard load are engineered. This includes elevated working platforms and walkways at height.

4) Scaffolds are built, maintained, modified, inspected and dismantled only by authorized or approved scaffolders.

5) Staircases are the first option for access. Where ladders are used, they extend at least 1 meter (3 ft) over any landing or scaffold platform and are inside the scaffold structure. Access that does not meet the above has fall protection measures in place, such as cages, friction devices or self-retracting lanyards. Swing gates or other barrier means are used at the entry points to prevent falls.

6) A highly visible multi-colour tagging system is displayed at each access point which identifies if a scaffold is safe for use or not (i.e. scaff-tag system)
   - Green Tag – scaffold is 100% complete and safe for access
   - Yellow Tag – scaffold is in modified status but can be used safely with additional controls as stated on the tag
   - Red Tag – scaffold is incomplete and is not safe to use except by scaffolders.

7) Each scaffold is inspected by an authorized or approved scaffolder after any modifications or after any event that may have compromised integrity of the scaffold such as inclement weather.

8) Scaffolding erection or dismantling activities are suspended during inclement weather or lightning.

9)   Scaffold material and components (planks boards, scaffolding tubes, couplings/fittings and base plates, toeboards) are in good condition and free from visible defects. Damaged material and components are removed from service.

10) Access ladder landing platforms are included at every 6 meters (20 feet).

11) Scaffolding is erected on stable and even work surfaces using base plates and/ or sills as necessary

12) Scaffold planking is securely attached and wooden planking has an overlap to the end supports.

13) Risk assessments consider the need for further dropped object prevention measures on and under scaffolding, e.g. barricades, use of nets.

14) Load category of the scaffolding is known and is identified on the scaff-tag.

15) It is prohibited to use scaffolding for either hanging or supporting material for which it is not designed, or using scaffolding as a structure to pull against in order to move materials.

Relevant IOGP Life-Saving Rules, Report 459

Protect yourself against a fall when working at height

Keep yourself and others out of the line of fire