

Technical / Safety Guidance Note

Guidance for the use of mobile access towers in net rigging and de-rigging

This is a collaborative guidance note issued by PASMA and FASET and is intended to give assistance to those responsible for the selection of suitable work at height equipment in respect of the requirements of the Work at Height Regulations 2005, for the purposes of rigging and de-rigging safety netting.

Generally, lightweight mobile access towers are **not** recommended for these activities because of the following:

1. The increased possibility of overturning caused by the imposed side loadings where nets are being positioned for rigging and de-rigging, and where border ropes are pulled taught.
2. Snagging of nets on components such as brace hooks and outrigger couplers.
3. The tendency for operatives to omit or remove stabilisers or outriggers.

However, there may be occasions where lightweight mobile access towers are suitable, provided the following criteria can be met:

1. The floor surface is flat, level and solid. Corrugated floor surfaces are not suitable, since they generally lead to unacceptable manual handling issues in repositioning the tower units. *[Before attempting to move a tower, a suitable and sufficient manual handling assessment should always be undertaken, paying particular attention not only to the weight of the tower, but also to the (in)ability of the operatives to move the tower without risk of its overturning.]*
2. There is sufficient floor space to deploy stabilisers or outriggers.
3. Towers are always located below each net attachment point to ensure operatives do not have to reach over the tower guardrails.
4. Provision is made for adequate training of operatives and additional supervision to ensure bad practices are not permitted, such as the omission of stabilisers, outriggers or other additional stability measures.
5. Additional measures are taken to prevent overturning, such as the use of ballast weights or tying in, which should be under the specific direction of the manufacturer.

