The Principles of MEWP Recovery and Rescue

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GLOBAL ACCIDENT DATA: ALL INCIDENT TYPES (2025 YTD*)

688	34	768	70
Total Reports	**Countries**	**Persons Involved**	**Fatalities**
Down 30.1%	0.0%	Down 30.7%	Down 34.6%

**Provisional Data: 2025*

UK & IRELAND ACCIDENT DATA: ALL INCIDENT TYPES (2025 YTD) – PROVISIONAL DATA*

430	2	4333	1
Total Reports	**Countries**	**Persons Involved**	**Fatalities**
Down 20.7%	--	Down 22.5%	Down 66.7%

1 x Fatal – Fall from Platform

**Provisional Data: 2025*

Stop Overturns!

Crushing can kill!

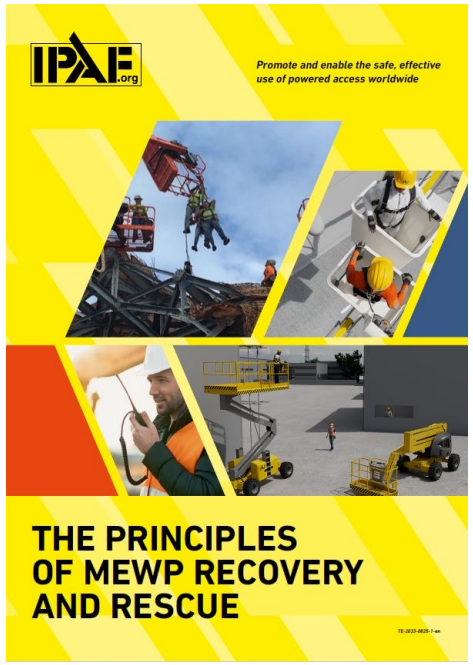
IPAF.org

High Voltage!

Don't fall for it!

IPAF SAFETY CAMPAIGNS: GLOBAL FATAL STATISTICS 2021-2024

112	92	60	65
Fall from the Platform	**High Voltage**	**Crushing can Kill**	**Stop Overturns**
Campaign launched 2022	Campaign launched 2023	Campaign launched 2024	Campaign launched 2025
2941 views of campaign in *80* countries since 2023	*10018* views of campaign in *128* countries since 2023	*19,864* views of campaign in *118* countries	*9175* views of campaign in 100 countries



Why was the guidance developed?

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Why was the guidance developed?

A workplace fatality involving a precarious entrapment situation resulting in the death of an employee. The coroner's inquest suggested more could be done to prevent future occurrences of this nature.

Working Group which consisted of MEWP OEMs, rental companies, Tier 1 construction companies, industry experts and IPAF staff

The document does not cover every potential scenario for recovery and rescue. Equipment, personnel, and situations are different. It's all about the PRINCIPLES of RECOVERY and RESCUE

New terminology “recovery & rescue”

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New terminology

Recovery

Recovery can be defined as the retrieval/lowering of a platform from the elevated position to the transport/stowed position, or a place of safety with or without personnel in the platform.

The lowering of the platform is done via the ground controls, or if they are inoperative, the emergency/auxiliary lowering system.

Examples of when recovery is required:

- **Medical incident or emergency**
- **MEWP malfunction**
- **Load sensing system has activated meaning the platform controls are inoperative**
- **Entrapment of an operator**
- **A platform occupant suspended in a safety harness**
- **Operator error**

New terminology

Rescue

Rescue is when a MEWP platform is unable to be lowered, and the **platform occupants require rescuing by platform-to-platform, or other method.**

This can be due to:

- **Inoperative ground and platform primary controls**
- **Inoperative emergency lowering controls**
- **Entanglement**
- **MEWP becoming unstable and is at risk of overturn**
- **A technical fault with a platform levelling system**

What's new?

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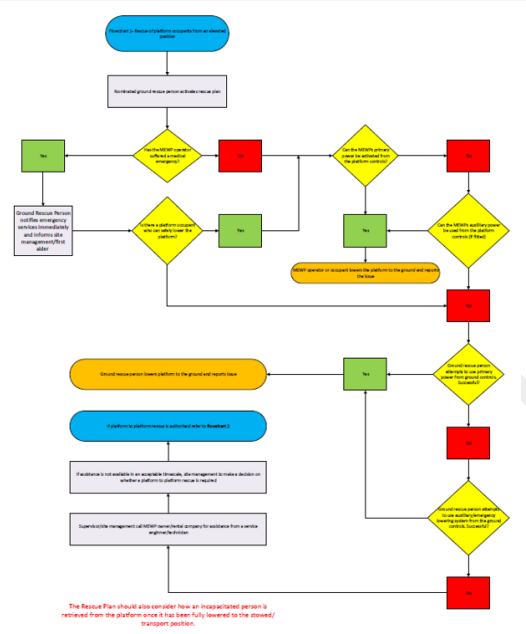
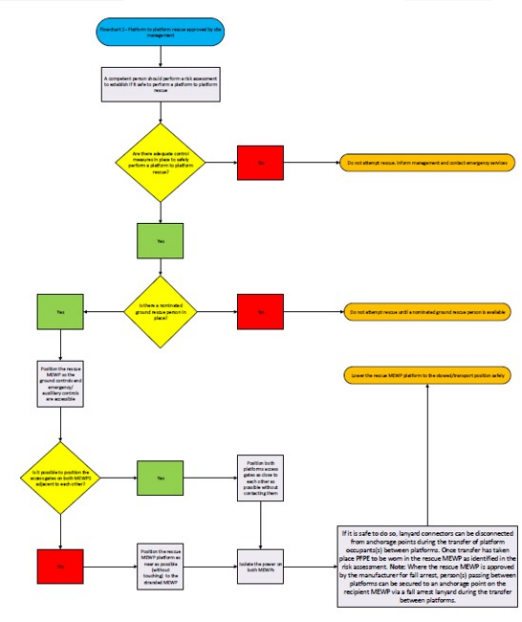
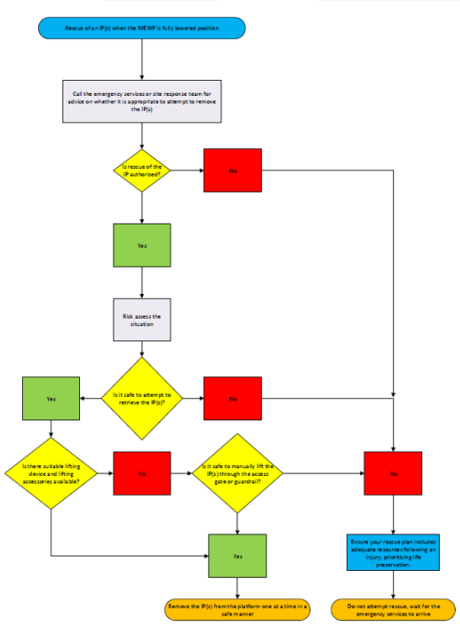
What's new? – New flowcharts

3 new easy to understand flowcharts for recovery and rescue

- **Ground controls**
- **Platform to platform**
- **Retrieval of an injured person in the stowed position**







What's new - MEWP recovery / rescue plan template

- MEWP details – manufacturer, model and identification number (if applicable)
- Nominated Ground Rescue Person(s) – name and contact details
- Communication method, i.e., two-way radio, mobile phone, hand signals, etc.
- Contact details and location of the owner of the MEWP and/or rental company service engineer/technician
- Site address and location
- Date and duration of rescue plan: From / / / to / / /

Situation	Proposed Action
Failure of platform primary controls in the elevated position	Where the normal primary power has failed at the platform controls, the MEWP operator will use the platform auxiliary controls (if fitted) to lower the platform to ground, or a place of safety
Failure of the operator to be able to operate the MEWP while elevated due to one of the following reasons: A. Operator incapacitated B. Auxiliary functions fail to operate from the platform controls	Where the operator is incapable of lowering the raised platform using the platform controls, the ground rescue person who has been familiarised with the ground controls and auxiliary/emergency lowering procedures will lower the platform safely using the primary power at the ground controls
Failure of primary power at the ground controls	Where the ground control primary power has failed, the ground rescue person will use the auxiliary/emergency lowering system at the base of the MEWP to lower the platform
Failure of ALL normal and auxiliary lowering functions	Where all primary power and auxiliary/emergency lowering systems have failed, the ground rescue person should report the issue immediately to their supervisor
Supervisor duties	The supervisor should contact the owner/rental company for assistance of a service engineer/technician to attend site. If assistance is not available in an acceptable timescale, they should report the issue to the site management
Site management duties	Site management to decide on whether a platform-to-platform rescue is required for the platform occupant(s)

What's new - Clearly defined responsibilities and principal duties for key duty holders

It is the responsibility of everyone listed above to ensure they understand the procedures to follow in the rescue plan in case of an emergency.

Note: The MEWP operator should not commence work until there is a suitable rescue plan in place and a ground rescue person.

No matter the duration of work, it is important to ensure that there are clear lines of responsibility set out when planning and performing work at height tasks when using a MEWP. The table below identifies the responsibilities and principal duties of the four key stakeholders.

Table 1- Key duty holders, their responsibilities and principal duties.

Duty holder	Responsibility	Principal duties
User (contractor/employer)	Organise and manage the task to ensure it is performed safely	Determine the work at height task and means of access
		Management and supervision of the work at height task
		MEWP selection
		Trained in the safe use of MEWPs
		Ensure MEWP operators are trained and familiarised
		The development of suitable and sufficient risk assessments and rescue plans to develop SSoW*
		Be able to safely lower a MEWP platform in the event of an emergency
		Correct PPE and PFPE is worn by site personnel
		Provide clear instructions
Operator	Complete the task in a safe manner	Understand the risks with the task to be performed
		Understand and follow preventative measures in place i.e. SSoW*
		Use the correct PPE and PFPE as instructed
	Training	Be trained and familiarised with the specific MEWP they are required to operate
		Complete pre-use inspections
	Communication	Ensure there is a communication method with the ground rescue person
		Have the authority not to commence work unless there is a rescue plan and a ground rescue person in place
Ground rescue personnel	Conduct rescue from the ground controls or emergency lowering/auxiliary system in a safe manner	Supervise the MEWP operator while working at height
	Training	It is preferable that the ground rescue person has undergone some form of formal training relevant to the task. However, all ground rescue persons should, as a minimum, be familiarised with the MEWP being used and the rescue procedures in place, so they are competent to lower the MEWP platform using the ground/emergency controls in the work situations to which they are exposed
		Have sufficient competency to safely lower the platform in the event of an emergency
	Communication	Have means of communication and raising the alarm with the MEWP operator and the response team
		Note: Some MEWPs with more complex emergency lowering systems may require two people to safely lower the platform
Response Team	Be available to conduct recovery and recue when the MEWP's ground controls and emergency lowering controls are inoperative or when there is a medical emergency with the MEWP operator	Be able to act to an emergency situation in a timely manner
		The response team are required to be trained MEWP operators as there may be a need to use another MEWP to perform a platform-to-platform rescue
	Communication	Have a suitable communication method such as a two-way radio

FASET Guidance

FASET Bulletin SN29 (Revision 2)
Safety Net Rescue

Those responsible for employees and workplaces need to be clear that when safety nets are provided, there is a potential for the need to carry out a rescue.

The Work at Height Regulations make specific references to rescue as follows:
"Organisation and planning
4.-(1) Every employer shall ensure that work at height is-
(a) properly planned
...and that its planning includes the selection of work equipment in accordance with regulation 7"
(2)... planning of work includes planning for emergencies and rescue (The Work at Height Regulations 2005).

Regulation 7 of The work at Height Regulations goes on to say:
"Selection of work equipment for work at height
7.-(1) Every employer, in selecting work equipment for use in work at height, shall -
... (b) take account of-
... (v) the need for easy and timely evacuation and rescue in an emergency
(vi) any additional risk posed by the use, installation or removal of that work equipment or by evacuation and rescue from it" (The Work at Height Regulations 2005).

In no particular order, methods of rescue may include:

- Self-rescue by climbing out of the net.
- Rescue from above (up to two persons may enter the net from above to assess, treat or aid the faller).
- Rescue from below by positioning a stretcher beneath the faller and cut the net to release them
- Rescue from below using a MEWP.
- Rescue from below using inflatable rescue systems.

But often MEWPs can be the solution……

The incapacitated man safely in the platform and ready to go

But often MEWPs can be the solution……

https://ipafaccidentreporting.org

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