

SAFETY METHOD STATEMENT FOR INDUSTRIAL ROPE ACCESS

CONTRACT: Finsbury Health Centre

JOB NUMBER: TBC

SITE ADDRESS: off Northampton Road, Finsbury, London

DATE: 17/10/06

Personnel

Small teams of suitably trained, highly specialised and experienced engineers undertake all work, one of whom is appointed Team Leader.

The minimum number of abseilers working together is two. This is to ensure that suitable help is at hand should an individual encounter difficulties. It is a very strict policy that lone working is not permitted.

If it is considered necessary by the Team Leader, an additional Martech engineer will be present to ensure that anchorages, ropes and belays are not tampered with by third parties.

The work is carried out in accordance with BS7985:2002, "Code of practice for the use of rope access methods for industrial purposes".

Work Equipment

All equipment is of a UIAA tested and approved design, or tested to the appropriate EN by the manufacturer.

The descending and safeguard devices are standardised to the Petzl Stop (or the more modern Petzl I'D) and Shunt (or the more modern Petzl ASAP) System (2 ropes).

Steel karabiners are preferred for use because they are less susceptible to corrosion than the aluminium type.

Ascending equipment, including the necessary foot loops and chest harnesses, is carried

to effect self-rescue.

The type of rope used is generally of the static 11mm variety manufactured to EN 1891 Type A. This is specifically designed for caving and industrial use and as such is subject to stringent strength tests. In some instances, an 11mm dynamic safety rope is used.

Equipment Maintenance

A record is maintained of equipment usage. Ropes and other equipment are logged and days out on site recorded.

All equipment is regularly inspected both during and after use.

Equipment is always replaced when showing signs of excessive wear or if it has been involved in usage, which may have caused hidden damage.

If excessive wear or damage is identified on site, the relevant equipment is immediately taken out of use.

Ropes are kept clean and are washed as necessary.

All new equipment will have been appropriately load tested if applicable, by an independent body.

Excluding ropes, all equipment is checked by a competent person on a six monthly basis and logged accordingly.

Irrespective of condition, ropes are replaced after 2 years use.

Safe Working Procedures

Generally, the rope system relies on one active rope and a second backup (or safety) rope.

The ropes are secured to a minimum of two independent anchorages, using "figure of eight" knots or similar for direct belays and alpine butterfly knots or similar for directional belays.

Anchors are individually chosen so as to be unquestionably reliable.

The ropes are often attached to a robust part of the building, such as an RSJ or concrete column, via two strops or similar. Alternatively a purpose designed abseil access cantilever beam may be employed, with two independent attachment points on it. This will be tested and certified as being in accordance with BS EN 795. The final possibility is the use of a couple of suitable temporary bolted ring type fixings (not scaffold type rings), either installed and tested by us, or certificated as tested by others. These will again be in

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accordance with BS EN 795.

All connections between rope and belay points will normally be made using a combination of wire strops and steel karabiners.

Ropes will be protected from sharp and abrasive edges utilising carpet tiles and/or rope protectors.

NB - *It is important to note that each abseil engineer is solely responsible for his own rope access installation and choice of anchorage(s) on site. This is an integral part of the training.*

Personal Protective Equipment

Considering the specialist nature of industrial rope access techniques, the choice of suitable clothing/personal protective equipment (PPE) must take into account the flexibility required to undertake the abseiling operation.

Abseiling engineers will wear suitable safety helmets and suitable footwear.

Safety helmets are approved industrial style abseiling helmets, to EN 397 and EN 12492 (Chin Strap).

Provision and use of other PPE will be dependent upon various factors such as the abseiling route to be undertaken, the surface condition of the structure, weather conditions, etc.

Rescue Techniques / Emergency Procedures

All of Martech abseil engineers have been trained in abseil rescue techniques, including self-rescue procedures, and these techniques are periodically practiced.

Prior to the commencement of any project of a difficult nature, site-specific rescue procedures are discussed, formulated and tested in practice by the individuals concerned.

First Aid

Each team carries a first aid kit and mobile telephone.

At least one member of the team has attended an Appointed Persons First Aid Training Course.

Third Party Safety

The main hazard to third party health and safety arises from falling debris, materials, etc during concrete testing operations. Exposure to this risk will be reduced by:

Equipment Safety

All lightweight work equipment used for the purpose of the work to be undertaken will be secured with a lanyard attached to the abseiler.

Heavier equipment will be supported on a third rope and will be prevented from swinging.

Ropes will be lowered from roof level and not thrown over the side of a structure.

Protection

The works shall be carefully coordinated with the site staff on a daily basis.

Suitable warning signs will be appropriately situated to provide adequate warning of overhead works.

Where appropriate, a suitable protective barrier will be situated to provide an adequate stand-off to prevent people from entering beneath the area of the works.

Where necessary, i.e. at doorways, a watchman will be posted at ground level to redirect members of the public, etc from the area of the works. If appropriate, the watchman will be provided with walkie-talkie communications linked to the abseilers. This will enable him to instruct the engineers to temporarily cease works if necessary.

Debris

Care will be taken to reduce the risk of materials falling.

Debris and other waste will be placed in a suitable container for removal from site.

PRIMARY LEGISLATION

Health and Safety at Work, etc, Act 1974
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
Construction (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1996

British Standards:

BS 7985:2002: Code of practice for the use of rope access methods for industrial purposes
BS 4928: Specification for Manmade Fibre Ropes
BS EN 795: Protection against falls from height – Anchor Devices – Requirements and Testing