

# INSTITUTE FOR WORK AT HEIGHT



# Rope Access Site Classifications and Supervision

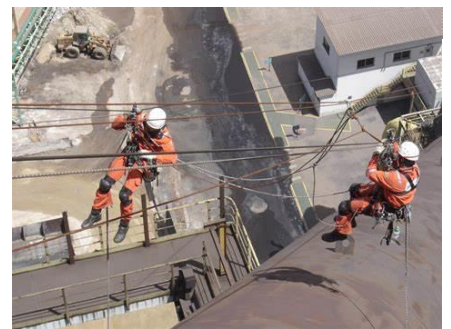
## Concern:

Due to the complex nature and the risk of rope access work, there are different understandings when it comes to worksite classifications and who should supervise a rope access site. This creates confusion within the industry and deviates from achieving an industry standard to which rope access work can be defined.

## Good Practice Note

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Good Practice notes inform the industry on how to embrace best practice and how to deal with issues that may arise. They are aligned with, but do not replace regulation as well as endorse industry standards.



## Legal References:

### **Construction Regulation 2014:**

#### **Rope Access Work**

18. (1) A contractor must –

- a) appoint a competent person in writing as a rope access supervisor with the duty of supervising all rope access work on site, including the duty of ensuring occupational health and safety compliance in relation to rope access work;
- b) ensure that all rope access work on the construction site is carried out under the supervision of a competent person; and
- c) ensure that all rope access operators are competent and licensed to carry out their work.

### **ISO 22846-2:**

#### **Personal equipment for protection against falls – Rope Access Systems**

#### **Part 2 – Code of Practice**

#### **4.8 Worksite Classifications**

There are two general classifications of rope access worksites.

- a) Simple: rope access worksites unaffected by any adjacent work or trades, where the anchor line follows a simple path from anchor to ground or platform level, where there is no requirement to pass knots or deviations greater than 20 degrees and where rescues can be carried out straight to ground or platform level
  - b) Complex: any rope access worksites where the requirements for a simple worksite cannot be met. The following are examples of additional factors that may define a complex worksite (non-exhaustive list)
    1. The use of re-anchors or a significant increase in techniques, e.g. when secondary techniques are needed, especially for rescues, because a single descent to the ground is not possible.
    2. Competence in long ascents and special rescue methods, e.g. environment without clear egress at the bottom
    3. The presence of other trades or activities in the near vicinity, which can impact on the rope access team
    4. Working on construction worksites, power stations, Petro-chemical plants and similar, where worksite conditions can be far more complex and demanding.
- NOTE: where any doubt exists as to the worksite classification, it is expected that, by default, the team will rate the worksite as “complex”

#### **4.9 Supervision**

4.9.1 Rope access worksites should be properly supervised to ensure the safety of operatives and others who can be affected on the worksite

4.9.2 It is essential that rope access supervisors have the experience and competence to supervise the rope access work

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## Requirement:

All rope access sites must have a competent and appointed rope access supervisor to ensure compliance and management of worksites.

Rope access worksites needs to be classified as a simple or complex site.

Where a worksite is classified by a rope access level 3 (supervisor) as a simple site, a level 2 may be appointed as an assistant supervisor of a specific team on a site were multiple rope access teams are assigned, however the level 3 still needs to implement the safe work procedures and do site sign off as well as be on-site at all times.

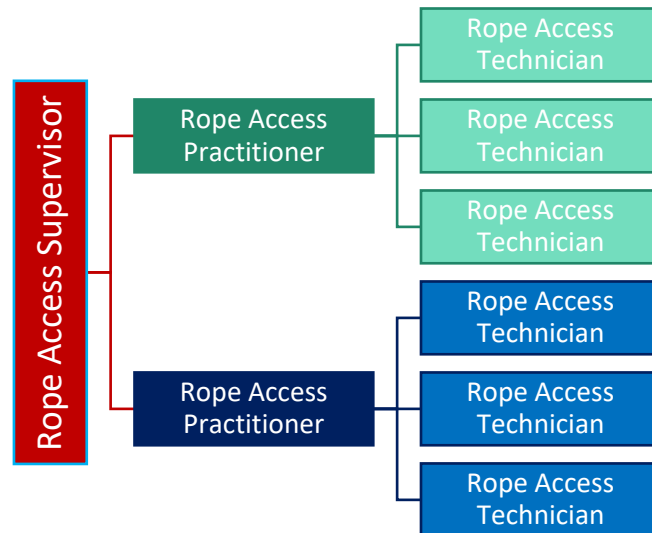
Rope Access Level 3 = Rope Access Supervisor

Rope Access Level 2 = Rope Access Practitioner

Rope Access Level 1 = Rope Access Technician

Staring ratio: -

1:2:3 = (1 x L 3) x (2 x L 2) x (6 x L 1)



## Important Notice:

The Level 2 who will be the assistant supervisor (team leader) does not take any accountability on site for the team they are leading but takes responsibility to ensure the work is carried out according to the specifications and established safe work procedures a per the rope access supervisor (level 3).

## The minimum training required:

### Rope Access Supervisor: (Level 3)

- ✓ Unit Standard 229998: Explain and perform fall arrest techniques when working at height (Level 1)
- ✓ Unit Standard 230000: Perform a limited range of rope access tasks and rescues (Level 2)
- ✓ Unit Standard 229996: Rig working ropes, undertake rescues and perform a range of rope access tasks (Level 3)
- ✓ Unit Standard 230001: Supervise rope access teams and perform advanced maneuvers and rescues (Level 3)
- ✓ Unit Standard 229997: Select equipment and rig ropes for rope access projects (Level 3)
- ✓ Complete First Aid Level 3

### Rope Access Practitioner: (Level 2)

- ✓ Unit Standard 229998: Explain and perform fall arrest techniques when working at height (Level 1)
- ✓ Unit Standard 230000: Perform a limited range of rope access tasks and rescues (Level 2)
- ✓ Unit Standard 229996: Rig working ropes, undertake rescues and perform a range of rope access tasks (Level 3)
- ✓ First Aid Level 1 certificate

## Note:

The fall protection plan for rope access sites needs to stipulate the work site classification as established by the rope access supervisor including the site-specific methods to be used.

## Thank you