

Purpose & Regulatory Requirements

The purpose of this document is to supplement the [Fall Protection – Production Safety Guidelines](#) and to provide guidance to assist Productions in pre-planning and preparing a site-specific Fall Rescue Response Procedure, anywhere production personnel conducts work that requires the use of Personal Fall Arrest Systems (PFAS). Productions are requested to review this document and complete the [Fall Protection Hazard Assessment Checklist](#) for each location before conducting work at height. A site-specific Fall Rescue Procedure must be documented in section D of the [Fall Protection Hazard Assessment Checklist](#) and be communicated to all personnel using PFAS.

At a minimum, the procedure should establish that:

- Personnel are strictly prohibited from working alone at heights.
- Prior to work, an effective site-specific rescue procedure must be developed and in-place.
- All fall protection equipment must be used correctly.
- Rescue equipment resources must be available onsite to promptly raise or lower the victim to safety.

A fallen and suspended crew member is a true medical emergency that needs immediate response. Suspension over an extended period can have severe medical consequences. A pre-planned strategy and procedure is needed to ensure the immediate rescue of a person who has fallen from an elevated work surface and is suspended in a full body harness. The Procedure may include self-rescue or assisted rescue.

Definitions

Self-Rescue

An act or instance of an employee using fall protection equipment for self-rescue.

Assisted-Rescue

A strategy or procedure, planned, to safely retrieve a person who has fallen from an elevated work surface using mechanical means.

Suspension Trauma

Suspension Trauma (also known as “harness-induced pathology” or “orthostatic shock”) is the natural physiological response being held motionless in a vertical position, where the body harness cuts off blood flow, including to the brain. Warning signs to look for:

- Light headedness / feeling faint
- loss of consciousness
- Nausea
- Sweating
- Shortness of breath
- Tingling or numbness of the arms or legs
- Anxiety
- Visual disturbance

Responsibilities

Competent Rescuer

Production Management and individual Dept Heads must ensure a Competent Rescuer is assigned/identified, who is experienced in fall rescue, and is responsible for developing rescue strategies and procedures for the site.

The Competent Rescuer:

- Is *typically* the Department Head, Key Grip, or Supervisor, but can be any crew member that is qualified.
- Has completed all appropriate Safety Pass (California) training, Competent Person Fall Protection training courses, or OSHA compliant programs.
- Must complete the [Fall Protection Hazard Assessment Checklist](#) prior to working.
- Ensure Authorized Rescuer(s) are qualified and familiar with the rescue equipment available on site.
- Ensure all crew working at heights are qualified and familiar with the *self*-rescue equipment before the commencement of work at heights.

Communication must be established:

- Distribute copies of the completed *Fall Protection Hazard Assessment Checklist* to all crew, Production Safety, and Production Management prior to working heights.
- Post the completed *Fall Protection Hazard Assessment Checklist* in conspicuous locations at the site during the date range of the work at height.

Authorized Rescuer(s)

Authorized Rescuer(s) must respond to fall emergency situations as outlined in the Fall Rescue Response Procedure listed in section D of the [Fall Protection Hazard Assessment Checklist](#).

Crew using Personal Fall Arrest Systems (PFAS)

- Must be familiar with the site-specific Fall Rescue Response Procedures.
- Must be competent in the use of PFAS prior to conducting work at heights.
- Must report unsafe conditions or behaviors to the Competent Rescuer or immediate Supervisor, and/or Production Safety.

Rescue Equipment

Review the best practices and provide proper rescue equipment. There are several factors and options to be considered when determining rescue options including, but not limited to, access, designated equipment, response time of emergency services etc. Rescue equipment should be designated in the Fall Rescue Procedure in Section D of the *Fall Protection Hazard Assessment Checklist*. Examples may include:

- Controlled Descent Devices
- Suspension Relief Straps
- Self-Rescue Backpacks (DBI or equivalent)
- SRL-Rescue
- Rescue Bag / Kit
- Harness
- Lanyards / Yo-yo's
- Rescue Rope
- Rescue Poles
- Rescue Ladder
- Aerial Lift
- Scissors lift
- Scaffold
- Crane

Preparation & Training Guidelines

- Ensure all crew members working at heights with PFAS are properly trained as outlined in the *Fall Protection – Production Safety Guidelines*.
- Ensure all crew members are aware of the site-specific dangers of working at heights and are properly trained on the site-specific rescue procedure for each location where fall hazard exists.
 - This can be communicated via Toolbox Talks or department training, and must be posted in a highly visible space
- Place Emergency Contact information in highly visible and accessible locations.
- Ensure all rescuers are trained and qualified to perform site-specific rescues
- Demonstrate and practice using relief straps, or “sitting position” in harnesses to relieve pressure during prolonged suspension
- Conduct mock rescue drills with equipment provided (self-pack, ladder, etc.)

When a Fall Occurs (General Rescue Response Procedure)

The following procedure are rescue response procedure guidelines that should be implemented immediately when a crew member has fallen and is suspended. Your site-specific Fall Rescue Response Procedure must be documented in section D of the [Fall Protection Hazard Assessment Checklist](#).

1. Stop all work, including any filming.
2. Call for Help
 - a. Call 9-1-1 / Emergency Services. Provide exact location (including building, floor, etc.).
 - i. Be sure Emergency Services has a clear path to rescue.
 - ii. Establish a safe zone for first responders (inside and outside). Do not wait for first responders to arrive before clearing the area! Have someone designated to meet and escort first responders.
3. Alleviate orthostatic intolerance if conscious
 - a. Fallen crew should deploy and use harness relief straps until rescue is completed.
 - b. If the relief straps are not available, assume sitting or cradle position as feasible.
4. Self-Rescue Options

If the person working at heights has properly selected and used their fall protection equipment, 90% of workers will be able to perform a Self-Rescue, which should include:

- a. Follow steps 1-3 above
- b. Have crew member try to climb back up if (< 3 feet), or
- c. Deploy self-rescue equipment if available (e.g., relief straps, controlled decent devices, nylon self-rescue ladder, etc.).
- d. After rescue, medical professionals must evaluate fallen crew members for potential injuries.

- e. Remove all impacted fall arrest system components from service. Document (bag-and-tag) components with name, date and activity at time of fall and return them to manufacturer or certified vendor for inspection.
5. Assisted-Rescue Options (e.g., aerial lift, rescue pole, etc.)
- If Self-Rescue is not possible, then an Assisted Rescue may be required, which should include:
- a. Prior to conducting work, complete the fall rescue response procedure located in section D of the *Fall Protection Hazard Assessment Checklist* to determine appropriate means of fall rescue.
 - b. The rescue team will raise or lower the fallen employee to the appropriate work platform or ground and provide medical aid as required.
 - c. The compliant rescue and descent device must be secured to an anchor (rated for at least 5,000 lbs.).
 - d. After rescue, medical professionals must evaluate fallen crew members for potential injuries.
 - e. Remove all impacted fall arrest system components from service. Document (bag-and-tag) components with name, date and activity at time of fall and return them to manufacturer or certified vendor for inspection.
6. If immediate self or assisted rescue is not possible:
- a. Follow steps 1-3 above
 - b. Monitor fallen crew member(s) for signs of suspension trauma and maintain communication with fallen crew members until off-site rescue is on-site to assist.
7. Post Incident Notifications:
- a. Following the fall event, notify your UPM, Production Safety Manager and Production Executive.