

Section 19 of the OSH Act requires employers to “provide and maintain workplaces, plant, and systems of work such that, so far as is practicable, the employees are not exposed to hazards.” This includes scaffolding.

The complexity of the scaffolding standards and various guidelines mean a high level of knowledge and experience is required to be able to adequately inspect and identify potential issues with the completed scaffold. Evidence suggests relying on the scaffold supplier to supply compliant equipment, and the erector to erect the scaffold in accordance with relevant guidelines may not be sufficient to ensure a builder meets their duty of care obligations, which then goes to the safety of site workers and the public in general.

The Master Builders Association of WA and the CFMEU WA recommends builders;

- Obtain the following information from the scaffold supplier as required by 10.3.3 of WA Code of Practice, AS/NZS 4576:1995
 - Instructions for erection, dismantling, transportation, storage and maintenance.
 - Guidance on the type of scaffolding coupler to use when connecting ties and other accessories.
 - The intended duty category of the scaffold, including its maximum platform capacity.
 - Maximum number of working platforms.
 - Maximum height.
 - A guide on safe working practices, including the stability of the erected scaffold.
- Sight and confirm scaffold erectors High Risk Work Licence (HRWL).
 - All persons erecting scaffold where the potential fall height is more than 4 metres **MUST** hold a current HRWL.
 - Confirm the validity and/or currency of a HRWL by visiting the WorkSafe database at <https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/worksafe-licence-and-registration-search>
- Obtain a safe work method statement (SWMS) from the scaffold erector and ensure that it is relevant to any specific hazards on the site. The SWMS must address the following issues as a minimum;
 - Inspection of equipment, prior to use, to identify any damaged/faulty equipment and isolate it to ensure that it is not used;
 - Storage area for unused equipment;
 - A clearly sign posted and barricaded exclusion zone in the area where scaffold is to be erected to avoid injury to other workers in the event of falling equipment/materials;
 - Where scaffolders could be exposed to a fall from any height, procedures and/or systems to be implemented to prevent, or at least reduce, the risk of a scaffolder falling or being injured as a consequence of a low level fall;
 - This should include detailed information on erection methods that provide fall protection as early as possible. I.e; decking lifts from beneath, working from fully decked platforms, provision of edge protection as soon as possible.
 - If fall arrest equipment is to be used then the scaffold system must be engineered for use as a fall arrest anchor and the procedures for anchoring the fall arrest equipment clearly identified. I.e; anchoring to ledgers, transoms etc.
 - Ensure there are no objects/materials in the fall zone that could increase the likelihood of injury in the event of a fall.
 - Identifies the scaffold team members and their individual qualifications/licences;
 - Any incomplete scaffold be clearly sign posted to prevent access by unauthorised persons.
- Obtain a Handover Certificate from the scaffolder. (Appendix A)
 - Scaffolds from which a person can fall more than 4 metres must be tagged prior to use and then inspected and the tag updated at least every 30 days. Inspection tags **MUST** be placed at every access point to the scaffold and be durable and legible.
 - Any scaffold erected by a licensed scaffolder, regardless of potential fall height, should be tagged and a handover certificate completed in accordance with this procedure.
 - In addition to the inspection/tagging requirements it is recommended that you obtain a separate Handover Certificate from the scaffolder. (Appendix A).
- Obtain a completed Scaffold Checklist. (Appendix B)

Client Details								
Client:								
Site Address:								
Supervisor/Manager:					Phone No.:			
Scaffold Supplier Details								
Supplier Name:								
Address:								
Contact Person:					Phone No.:			
Scaffold Erector Details								
Name:					Phone No.:			
Scaffold HRWL Details:		SB	SI	SA	HRWL No.	Date of Issue:		
Project Details								
Project/Reference Number:								
Description of area handed over:								
Drawings attached:								
Intended use of scaffold:								
Duty Category:		Light Duty	Medium Duty	Heavy Duty	Special Duty			
Note: Special duty category scaffolds must be accompanied by design drawings and approvals								
Number of working decks:								
Top working platform height:								
3 m Bays:		2.4 m Bays:			1.8 m Bays:			
Additional Details:								
Handover Inspection of Scaffold								
The scaffold detailed above has been erected in accordance with;								
<input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturers/suppliers specifications and guidelines (documentation must be attached), or <input type="checkbox"/> Engineers design specifications (drawings and approvals must be attached), or <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Standards AS/NZS 1576 parts 1 to 6, or <input type="checkbox"/> The WA Code of Practice (AS/NZS 4576:1995).								
<i>Note:</i> A completed scaffold inspection checklist should be provided and attached to this handover certificate stating every aspect of the inspected scaffold which meets the required standards. Subsequent inspections should be recorded on an inspection checklist and provided to the relevant person.								
Name:				Signature:				
Time:				Date:				
Acceptance – on behalf of the client								
Name:				Signature:				
				Date:				
Arrange for scaffold to be inspected at intervals not exceeding 30 days, after any changes or modifications or immediately following an incident which may affect the adequacy of the scaffold. The design registration number for prefabricated scaffolding must be kept readily accessible at all times, for example near the scaffold.								

APPENDIX B – Scaffold Inspection Checklist

1. Scaffold vicinity

- Has public protection been provided?
- Have safeguards against overhead electric lines been provided?
- Is there control over vehicle movement?
- Is there control over crane operation?
- Are there controls for storage, handling and using hazardous substances?
- Are scaffolds erected a safe distance away from trenches or excavations?

2. Supporting structure

- Is the supporting structure in a safe condition?
- Does the supporting structure have satisfactory strength?
- Are there controls to prevent deterioration of the supporting structure?
- Are all measures to strengthen the supporting structure satisfactory?
- Is the risk of the supporting structure being overloaded from other sources satisfactorily controlled?
- Is the scaffold built on solid ground? If built on soft ground are sole boards used to properly distribute the load?

3. Sole boards and base plates

- Are there enough sole boards?
- Are the sole boards of suitable material and in a serviceable condition?
- Are the sole boards secure?
- Are there enough baseplates?
- Are the baseplates of the correct type?
- Are the baseplates serviceable and of suitable dimensions?
- Are the baseplates secure?

4. Scaffold structure

- Are the standards bearing firmly?
- Are the standards plumb or as designed?
- Is the longitudinal standard spacing correct?
- Is the transverse standard spacing correct?
- Are the joints in standards correctly positioned?
- Are the joints in standards correctly secured—special duty or hung scaffold?
- Are the ledgers level or as designed?
- Are the ledgers continuous or as designed?
- Are the lift heights correct?
- Is the horizontal ledger spacing correct?
- Are the ledgers correctly secured?
- Are ledger joints correctly positioned—tube and coupler scaffold?
- Are the joints in ledgers correctly secured—tube and coupler scaffold?
- Are there enough transoms or putlogs?
- Are the transoms or putlogs correctly positioned and secured?
- Is the bracing satisfactory?
- Is the scaffold stable?
- Are the ties correctly positioned and correctly fixed?
- Has mixing of components been approved in writing by a competent person?

APPENDIX B – Scaffold Inspection Checklist

5. Platforms

- Does the scaffold have the required number of working platforms?
- Are the working platforms at the required locations?
- Are catch platforms correctly positioned?
- Are the platforms and supporting scaffold constructed for the relevant duty live loads?
- Are the platform dimensions suitable for the intended work?
- Is there satisfactory edge protection?
- Are the platforms correctly constructed?
- Are planks secured against wind?

6. Entry and exit

- Is there safe entry and exit to every scaffold platform?
- Are temporary stairways correctly installed?
- Are portable ladders of an industrial grade, serviceable and correctly installed?
- Are entries, exits and access platforms correctly installed?

7. Containment sheeting

- Has the scaffold been designed for wind loading on containment sheeting?
- Has the retention of rainwater and its effect on increasing weight been considered?
- Are the fixing ties secure?
- Are there rips or tears?
- Are the overlap joints satisfactory?

8. Mobile scaffolds

- Is the supporting surface hard and flat?
- Is the area of operation free of overhead electric lines and other hazards?
- Are floor penetrations covered?
- Are the castor wheel locks in working order? They should be locked at all times, except during movement of the scaffold.

9. General fitness for purpose

- Is there provision for material handling?
- Are the clearances between the scaffold and adjacent structures correct?
- Is there protection from falling debris?
- Has the scaffold been safely designed to support attachments?
- Are approaches and platforms effectively lit?
- Have inspection/scaffold tags been completed and placed at every access point?

10. This scaffold has been erected and inspected in accordance with

- Manufacturers/suppliers specifications and guidelines (documentation must be attached), or
- Engineers design specifications (drawings and approvals must be attached), or
- Australian Standards AS/NZS 1576 parts 1 to 6, or
- The WA Code of Practice (AS/NZS 4576:1995).

Scaffolder Name:..... Signature:.....

Date:..... Time:.....