

GUIDANCE FOR RIGGING IN EUROPEAN ARENAS

EUROPEAN ARENAS ASSOCIATION

Introduction

This document is a shortened version of the general rigging guidance that has been produced by members of the European Arenas Association (EAA) for use in EAA venues.

Definitions

Rigging

For the purpose of this guidance, rigging is defined as “the installation, removal or other activity using lifting or suspension equipment or accessories used in tension for lifting or supporting display, production, performance or event technical requirements”.

Lifting Equipment

Any item used to raise, lower or suspend a load.

Employer

A person or entity which hires the services of another.

Safe Working Load (SWL)

The maximum load for which the equipment may safely be used, the SWL may differ from country to country in accordance with local regulations.

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1 Competence

1.1 A competent person is someone who has sufficient training and experience or knowledge to carry out rigging operations safely whilst recognising their own limitations. Rigging operations shall be undertaken and supervised by competent persons who are qualified by training and experience.

1.2 Any company involved with rigging operations must appoint an authorised person to advise on rigging matters. The authorised person shall have the practical experience and theoretical knowledge of the use of any equipment to be used to enable faults and weaknesses to be assessed and to determine whether such equipment is able to perform within its design limits.

The appointed authorised person shall carry out periodic examinations in line with relevant European Legislation and the approved company examination regime, or at more regular frequencies.

The authorised person must have authority to reject the use of defective equipment when the defect(s) render the equipment unsuitable or unsafe for its intended use

1.3 Riggers working on the ground must have a level of knowledge to enable them to undertake the pre use checks of lifting equipment and accessories to prepare them for lifting and, whilst not necessarily having the experience for working at height, have the same knowledge as that of a rigger working at height.

1.4 Training for riggers may include but not be limited to the following:

- Rope access techniques in accordance with current legislation and guidance
- Emergency First Aid
- Manual Handling Techniques
- Mobile Elevated Work Platforms and other similar equipment
- Rescue Techniques
- Use of lifting equipment as a competent person

In assessing experience, account should be taken of the fact that, in many cases, riggers gain their experience within the industry and that historically there has been a lack of formal training leading to nationally recognised qualifications. However, it is recommended that where possible, riggers should undertake training in relevant areas and a record of this training kept in the company files.

2 General Safety Precautions

2.1 Working underneath rigging operations

Where possible, all personnel should be excluded from beneath areas where overhead rigging or lifting operations are taking place.

The exclusion zone shall be clearly identified and appropriate signs should be in place to close off the area entirely.

When designating a hard-hat area, this is more easily managed if an entire space, hall or room is designated as such, rather than specific areas within the space. Clear and unambiguous signage must be put in place.

The person or persons responsible for designating exclusion zones, hard-hat areas and for issuing hard-hats must be defined. This person must also determine when the area ceases to be an exclusion zone or hard-hat area.

2.2 Working at height

Duty Holders must:

- Avoid work at height where possible.
- Use work equipment or other measures to prevent falls where they cannot avoid working at height.
- Where they cannot eliminate the risk of a fall, use work equipment or other measures to minimise the distance and consequences of a fall should one occur.

Work at height must be properly planned, appropriately supervised and undertaken by competent individuals all of which should be supported by appropriate documentation.

Rigging Work at height should not be undertaken by an individual without a second person on hand to react to any accidents or safety related situations that may arise. Ideally that person should be a rigger competent with working at height.

Work at height should not be undertaken by an individual who is feeling unwell or suffering from a condition (physical or mental) that may result in difficulties when working at height. Any such condition must be reported to the Rigging Manager / Supervisor prior to work commencing.

Under no circumstances shall rigging personnel be under the influence of alcohol and / or drugs while carrying out rigging operations.

Riggers shall obtain confirmation from their Doctor / Physician that any prescribed medication will not affect their ability to perform their duties. Any such confirmation must be reported to the Rigging Manager / Supervisor prior to work commencing.

High-level walkways and work areas must be kept clear of loose equipment at all times. An inspection of the work area should be undertaken before work commences and upon completion of work. Tools and equipment should be hoisted to high level by means of rope or similar system rather than being carried by individuals.

Any loose equipment (including tools and communication devices) must be properly secured when working at height.

2.2.1 Access Equipment

All access equipment shall be used in accordance with manufacturers' instructions / guidelines, including the correct use of harnesses and head protection.

The Safe Working Load of access equipment shall be permanently displayed on the equipment. It is the responsibility of the operator of the equipment to ensure that the carried weight does not exceed the Safe Working Load.

Special attention should be paid to the correct assembly and stability of ladders and other static forms of access equipment, including the use of outriggers where fitted.

Persons trained in the correct use of such equipment should only carry out assembly of static access equipment.

Operators of Mobile Elevated Work Platforms for use in rigging related operations must ensure that they comply with venue competency requirements.

2.2.2 Flexible Ladders

Flexible ladders used to access flown truss structures shall only be used in conjunction with a suitable fall arrest system. Fall arrestors should be rigged independently of the flown structure and positioned directly above the user. In cases where it is intended to attach fall arrestors to ground supported systems, the manufacturer of the support structure must be consulted.

2.2.3 Mobile Elevated Work Platforms

If it is necessary for an operative to leave a mobile elevated work platform while positioned at high level, he / she must have appropriate PPE and identify a secure point of anchorage for the harness lanyard. The lanyard shall be secured before leaving the platform.

When returning to the platform, the operative must ensure the lanyard remains in position until the transfer to the carriage has been completed. At no time should the operative be connected to both the platform and the structure.

3 Personal Protective Equipment for Work at Height

3.1 General

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for working at height shall be provided by employers and the self-employed. PPE for working at height should be suitable and sufficient for the work to be carried out and conform to relevant standards, legislation, regulations and venue specific requirements

The users of the PPE must be trained in its use and inspection. Inspections should be documented. Equipment should be renewed in accordance with any manufacturers' recommendations.

Guidance on the use of commonly used items of PPE is contained in relevant European Norms.

3.2 Rescue from workplaces at height

Venues and riggers must have in place a rescue plan and the appropriate equipment and training for a rescue operation.

Within the venue, safe systems will be available such as horizontal lifeline systems, catch net systems, fall arrest systems or some combination of these. Ideally consideration will be given to self-rescue methods during the design and installation phases of such systems; production must have their own rescue plan in place.

In any rescue plan, some of the areas to consider are:

- Correct PPE i.e. compliant with the recommendations in Section 2.2 of this guidance.
- The risks of lone working. A second person that should ideally be a competent climbing rigger will be able to react immediately to a situation.
- A person falling in a full body harness may very quickly experience circulatory problems and there is a risk of cardiac arrest from the shock.
- Communication
- Location of access equipment
- Location of medical facilities
- Liaison with the Fire & Rescue Emergency Services to ascertain means of access when working at heights.

- Availability of telephone numbers and contact details for relevant individuals and agencies.