



**INTERNATIONAL POWERED ACCESS FEDERATION**

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## **Guidance on MEWP security**

Individuals who operate mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs) without authorisation or adequate training, or who knowingly misuse MEWPs, expose themselves and those around them to increased and unnecessary risk of injury. While employees have a duty of care for their own safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions, employers also have a duty to implement measures to secure the MEWP when not in use. It is essential that MEWPs are secured and managed correctly to ensure that only competent and nominated personnel operate the equipment in accordance with the employer's safe system of work. All MEWPs should be stored in a safe and secure manner when left unattended. This document provides guidance on how this may be achieved.

### **Lockable switch**

In accordance with design standards, manufacturers provide a lockable switch, which is controlled by a key specifically to prevent unauthorised use. These keys should only be issued to authorised operators and returned by them at the end of the work period. However, similar makes and models of MEWP can frequently be operated by a common key design. This means that controlling the use of a MEWP solely by restricting distribution of the key is not always possible.

### **When in use**

It is important to ensure that the MEWP's over-riding emergency systems be available during normal operation for immediate use should the operator suffer an injury or become incapacitated. This can be done by ensuring that the key remains in the base unit during normal operation.

It is essential that a work site risk assessment should be performed before any work is attempted with a MEWP and the appropriate precautions should be followed to ensure the safety of the operator and others in the area. The resulting risk management plan should include a detailed rescue plan for any activity involving MEWP operators working at height.

In situations where keeping the key in the base increases risk, e.g. when working on or adjacent to public areas, additional control measures may be implemented. These could include:

- The appointment of a nominated person to supervise the MEWP operation, thus allowing the key to remain in the base control unit when working in a public area
- The provision of a key(s) to be held by the nominated person(s) who are trained and authorised to react in the event of an emergency

### **Additional security devices**

If during the work site risk assessment, it is determined that the standard manufacturer-provided security device (typically a key actuated switch) and site-specific security measures are insufficient to secure the MEWP when not in use, an additional security device should be considered.

There are differing designs available for MEWPs to further enhance machine security. These include:

**Battery isolation switch** – These devices allow the primary MEWP battery power supply to be disconnected by a switch that may then be physically locked in the off-position.



**Key pads** – Once the main ignition key has been activated, they require the operator to enter a unique and pre-determined code into a keypad to activate the machine functions. The employer should ensure that the PIN security number is controlled in order to prevent machine security being compromised.



**Smart cards** – This technology requires the operator to swipe a pre-authorized card or fob across a reader or sensor in order to authorize use of the MEWP. The controlled issue of unique smart cards is essential to prevent machine security being compromised.



To learn more about the availability of these and other additional security devices, you should contact the manufacturer or your local rental company.

### **When not in use**

When the MEWP is left unattended, the keys should be removed.

When not in use, or awaiting removal from site, the MEWP should be parked in a designated area, preferably a secure compound or a supervised area, inaccessible to unauthorised persons. The MEWP should be in the transport position, with the main power switched off and any parking brakes or wheel chocks applied.

It should be noted that under specific hire terms and conditions, the employer may still be responsible for the machine until it is collected from site – even though the rental company has been contacted and an off-hire number obtained.

Further information on parking and securing of MEWPs can be found in:

- BS 8460 *Code of Practice for the safe use of MEWPs*
- ISO 18893 *Mobile elevating work platforms – Safety principles, inspection, maintenance and operation*
- ANSI A92.3 *Manually Propelled Elevating Aerial Platforms*
- ANSI A92.5 *Boom-Supported Elevating Work Platforms*
- ANSI A92.6 *Self-Propelled Elevating Work Platforms*