

BS 8560: 2102, Code of practice for the design of buildings incorporating safe working at height

The British Standards Institution (BSI) has published BS 8560: 2012, *Code of practice for the design of buildings incorporating safe working at height*.

BS 8560 encourages designers to assess, as early as possible in the design process, how work at height can be minimized and, where required, the provision of practical, efficient, cost-effective solutions for the safety of those who work at height.

New build and refurbishment projects require people to work at height over the lifespan of a building to construct, clean, maintain and repair it. By its nature, work at height is hazardous and presents the risk of a fall. Falls from height account for a significant proportion of fatalities and serious injuries experienced during construction and maintenance. As a significant health and safety risk, it is important that everyone who works within the construction industry gives it appropriate attention. Designers are pivotal in the early stages of this process.

Technical aspects include:

- Design development process, including work at height;
- Communication;
- Designing for the safety of operatives working at height;
- Buildability;
- Occupiers and end user;
- Balancing capital and life cycle costs;
- Facilities management; and
- Maintenance strategy.

The document includes useful ‘at a glance’ drawings showing:

- Design characteristics that affect the selection of access methods;
- Typical methods of permanent access for roof maintenance; and
- Different types of building access methods such as:
 - ground and floor based equipment;
 - building-mounted access equipment; and
 - building-based personnel access systems.

The document also includes an ‘options matrix’ tool that, according to BSI, is intended to assist the design team to:

- Analyse the conflicting demands and constraints of the project.
- Assess these as part of a “risk management” process
- Record these issues in a visually explanatory method
- Provide a visually clear project “deliverable” document that can be used to develop and eventually explain the rationale for the agreed project team solution.

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