

BS 7981:2017



BSI Standards Publication

**Code of practice for the installation,
maintenance, thorough examination
and safe use of mast climbing work
platforms (MCWPs)**

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Summary of pages

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Foreword

Publishing information

This British Standard is published by BSI Standards Limited, under licence from The British Standards Institution, and came into effect on 31 October 2017. It was prepared by Technical Committee MHE/12, *Lifting Platforms*. A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its secretary.

MHE/12 wishes to acknowledge the personal contributions of Adrian Bolton and David Oldham to the drafting of this and previous editions of BS 7981.

Supersession

This British Standard supersedes BS 7981:2002, which is withdrawn.

Information about this document

Mast climbing work platforms (MCWPs) are used as temporary working places, giving variable height access to specific areas above or below ground level. In many cases they are more convenient to use than other forms of access equipment such as ladders, scaffolding, staging or suspended cradles. Examples of MCWPs are shown in [Figure 1](#) and [Figure 2](#).

This British Standard sets out guidance and recommendations to ensure that MCWPs are installed, dismantled, maintained, thoroughly examined and used in a safe manner.

This British Standard was drawn up with the participation of HSE representatives.

This is a full revision of the standard, and introduces the following principal changes:

- a) greater detail on the implementation of a risk assessment;
- b) simplification of the responsibilities for the safe operation of an MCWP, including:
 - 1) the removal of the term “user” and its replacement with “operator”;
 - 2) new recommendations for the “appointed person (user)” and “appointed person (supplier)”;
 - 3) the recommendation for a trained installer to remove and reinstall a top tie; and
 - 4) clarification of the role of the demonstrator;
- c) the replacement of “induction” with “familiarization”, and additional recommendations for familiarization;
- d) additional recommendations for:
 - 1) alteration;
 - 2) thorough examination, including examination following installation, reconfiguration and repositioning;
 - 3) the use of safety harnesses and the preparation of a rescue plan;
 - 4) record retention;
- e) a new table giving a mast climbing work platform training needs analysis;
- f) new example MCWP daily pre-use and weekly checklists in [Annex A](#); and
- g) a new example checklist for thorough examination ([Annex E](#)).

Use of this document

As a code of practice, this British Standard takes the form of guidance and recommendations.

It should not be quoted as if it were a specification and particular care should be taken to ensure that claims of compliance are not misleading.

Any user claiming compliance with this British Standard is expected to be able to justify any course of action that deviates from its recommendations.

Presentational conventions

The provisions of this standard are presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Its recommendations are expressed in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is “should”.

Commentary, explanation and general informative material is presented in smaller italic type, and does not constitute a normative element.

The word “should” is used to express recommendations of this standard. The word “may” is used in the text to express permissibility, e.g. as an alternative to the primary recommendation of the clause. The word “can” is used to express possibility, e.g. a consequence of an action or an event.

Where words have alternative spellings, the preferred spelling of the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary is used (e.g. “organization” rather than “organisation”).

Contractual and legal considerations

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

In particular, attention is drawn to the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) [\[1\]](#).

1 Scope

This British Standard gives recommendations and guidance for the installation, dismantling maintenance and thorough examination of mast climbing work platforms (MCWPs), which are temporarily installed, powered and designed to be used by persons from which to carry out work. It also gives recommendations and guidance on the safe use of MCWPs.

NOTE 1 The vertical moving component (work platform/deck) of an MCWP is used to move persons and their equipment and materials for the work carried out from the work platform to and from a single point. This is one of the features that distinguish MCWPs from builders' hoists.

This British Standard does not give recommendations for:

- a) dealing with the hazards involved in the manoeuvring, erection or dismantling, fixing or removal of any materials or equipment which are not part of the mast climbing work platform;
- b) the handling of specific hazardous materials;
- c) delivering persons and/or materials to fixed landing levels; or

NOTE 2 Equipment referred to as lifts, hoists or transport platforms is dealt with by other standards, including BS EN 12158-1, BS EN 12159 and BS EN 81-43.

- d) mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs) as defined in BS EN 280, suspended access equipment as defined in BS EN 1808 or lifting tables as defined in BS EN 1570 (both parts).

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes provisions of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

BS EN 1495, *Lifting platforms — Mast climbing work platforms*¹

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this British Standard, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1 advanced/senior installer

installer trained to conduct thorough examination

3.2 appointed person (supplier)

competent person appointed by the supplier who is responsible for liaising with the appointed person (user) and for the specification, installation planning, erection and dismantling of the MCWP

3.3 appointed person (user)

competent person appointed by the management of the user organization who is responsible for liaising with the appointed person (supplier) and the safe use, inspection, servicing and maintenance of the MCWP

3.4 base frame

part of the MCWP which provides support at ground level for the mast and elevating assembly

[SOURCE: BS EN 1495:1997+A2:2009, 3.9, modified]

¹ This standard also gives informative references to BS EN 1495:1997+A2:2009.