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FALL PROTECTION CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS



Society of Professional Rope Access Technicians

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Notes for Usage:

For the most recent [standards versions](#), [supporting documentation](#), and [news](#), visit <https://sprat.org>.

Terminology from SPRAT’s *Defined Terms* used in this document is shown in ***bold, italic*** type unless written in a primary section heading.

New terminology in this document that has not received approval for inclusion in SPRAT’s *Defined Terms* is shown in **bold** type unless written in a primary section heading. Interim definitions for these terms are provided in [Appendix 1](#).

Usage of the word ‘shall’ denotes a mandatory requirement.

Usage of the word ‘should’ denotes a recommendation. The word ‘should’ does not connote indifference or ambivalence regarding a statement.

Approximate conversions of units are presented in parentheses. These approximations are provided as a reference and are the standard. When a value is presented as a limit, approximations are greater than an expressed minimum or less than an expressed maximum.

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1. Purpose, Scope, and Exceptions

1.1. Purpose

- 1.1.1. This document establishes a certification with performance-based criteria that verifies an individual's understanding and safe use of fall protection systems.
- 1.1.2. This document establishes a minimum baseline of knowledge and skill that a certified individual should possess regarding the use of fall protection systems.
- 1.1.3. This document is intended for use by:
 - 1.1.3.1. **Employers** managing a program that may include the use of rope access and other fall protection systems.
 - 1.1.3.2. **Rope access technicians** that transition between **rope access systems** and other fall protection systems.
 - 1.1.3.3. Individuals whose job requires the safe use of, and transition between fall protection systems.

1.2. Scope

- 1.2.1. This document establishes criteria for a candidate to demonstrate the safe use of the following fall protection systems:
 - 1.2.1.1. Travel restraint
 - 1.2.1.2. Energy absorbing lanyards
 - 1.2.1.3. Backup systems (vertical lifelines)
 - 1.2.1.4. Overhead self-retracting devices
 - 1.2.1.5. Personal self-retracting devices
 - 1.2.1.6. Ladder safety systems
 - 1.2.1.7. Horizontal lifelines
 - 1.2.1.8. Adjustable positioning lanyards and descenders
 - 1.2.1.9. Rope access system for descending
- 1.2.2. This document provides:
 - 1.2.2.1. Candidate eligibility requirements
 - 1.2.2.2. Candidate training requirements
 - 1.2.2.3. **Written test** requirements
 - 1.2.2.4. **Performance principles** and **grading system** for **demonstration** of use of fall protection systems

1.3. Exceptions

- 1.3.1. The use of fall protection systems while exposed to a **free fall potential** of greater than 2 m (6.5 ft) or where an edge may be encountered during a fall is considered an unnecessary risk as part of this certification, and is outside the scope of this standard.
- 1.3.2. While ensuring prompt rescue from fall protection systems is a requirement of a fall protection plan, partner rescue is outside the scope of this standard.
- 1.3.3. While documented inspections are a requirement of a managed fall protection program, documented inspection is outside the scope of this standard.
- 1.3.4. A performance-based evaluation is limited by the equipment and fall protection systems in use at the evaluation site, and cannot address all criteria that may be applicable to all types of work requiring the use of fall protection systems.
- 1.3.5. Consideration should be given by an **employer** to determine additional training requirements for the specific fall protection systems and equipment used during the completion of, as well as an individual's suitability for a particular type of work.

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2. Fall Protection Certification

2.1. General Information

2.1.1. Successful completion of a fall protection evaluation and written test components shall be required to obtain a SPRAT fall protection certification.

2.1.2. Fall protection evaluation and written test components shall be hosted and administered in accordance with policies and procedures maintained by the Evaluations Committee.

2.2. Fall protection Certification Process

2.2.1. An Evaluation Session Host shall host a fall protection evaluation.

2.2.2. An Evaluator shall administer the fall protection evaluation.

2.2.3. A provisional result shall be issued to the candidate after the completion of the fall protection evaluation.

2.2.4. Upon review of documentation demonstrating successful completion of requirements, SPRAT shall issue a fall protection certification to a candidate.

2.3. Fall protection Certification Validity

2.3.1. Initial certification is valid for three years from the date of the fall protection evaluation.

2.3.2. Re-certification completed within 6 months prior to expiration of the current certification is valid for three years from the date of the previous certification expiration.

3. Candidate Eligibility Requirements

3.1. General

3.1.1. A candidate shall be at least 18 years of age.

3.1.2. A candidate shall provide proof of identification.

3.1.3. A candidate shall sign an affidavit agreeing to policies established by the Evaluations Committee.

3.2. Training Requirements

3.2.1. A candidate shall receive training by a *competent trainer* within six months prior to their initial participation in a fall protection evaluation.

3.2.2. A candidate should receive training by a *competent trainer* within six months prior to participation in a subsequent fall protection evaluation.

3.2.3. Training shall include presentation, at a minimum of:

3.2.3.1. Fall protection system and equipment information used during the fall protection evaluation.

3.2.3.2. Performance Principles of Section 4 and their application to exercises within Section 6.

3.2.3.3. SPRAT's *Fall Protection Evaluation Guidelines*

3.2.3.4. SPRAT's *Clearance Requirement Guidelines*

3.2.3.5. SPRAT's *Presiding Regulatory Authority Reference* information relevant to the fall protection evaluation location.

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4. Fall protection evaluation Performance Principles

4.1. General

- 4.1.1. Requirements shall be completed in a safe and efficient manner.
- 4.1.2. Specific equipment and techniques shall not be specified.
- 4.1.3. A candidate or load is considered to be in a *fall zone* when moving or suspended at any height above the next lower level or within 2 m (6.6 ft) of an unprotected edge.

4.2. Fall Protection Plan

- 4.2.1. Site specific safety policies shall be followed.
- 4.2.2. Helmets shall be used while in a *hazard zone*.
 - 4.2.2.1. Helmets with fastened chinstraps shall be used while in a *fall zone*.
- 4.2.3. Fall protection systems shall be used in accordance with the fall protection plan.
 - 4.2.3.1. Components of fall protection systems shall be compatible.
 - 4.2.3.2. Use of **fall protection systems** and equipment should be used in accordance with manufacturer specifications.
 - 4.2.3.3. Use of **fall protection systems** and equipment shall not be utilized in ways that are expressly prohibited by the manufacturer.
 - 4.2.3.4. Harness connections used within **fall protection systems** shall be in accordance with the manufacturer and the *presiding regulatory authority* where the fall protection evaluation is conducted.
- 4.2.4. Equipment shall be inspected before each use.

4.3. Fall arrest systems

- 4.3.1. Unless using a travel restraint system, an appropriate **fall arrest system** shall be utilized when a candidate is in a *fall zone*.
- 4.3.2. **Fall arrest systems** shall incorporate appropriate *anchorage systems* in accordance with the site fall protection plan.
- 4.3.3. **Fall arrest systems** shall be used in a manner that minimizes *free fall potential*.
 - 4.3.3.1. *Free fall potential* shall not exceed 2 m (6.5 ft).
 - 4.3.3.2. When utilizing energy absorbing lanyards, *free fall potential* should not exceed 1.2 m (4 ft) when a candidate establishes, uses, or removes their **positioning system**.
 - 4.3.3.3. When utilizing all other *fall arrest systems*, *free fall potential* should not exceed 0.6 m (2 ft) when a candidate establishes, uses, or removes their **positioning system**.
- 4.3.4. **Fall arrest systems** shall be used in a manner that minimizes swing fall potential.
 - 4.3.4.1. Swing fall potential shall not exceed a *swing fall distance* of 1.2 m (4 ft).
 - 4.3.4.2. Swing fall potential should not exceed a *swing fall distance* of 0.6 m (2 ft).
- 4.3.5. **Fall arrest systems** shall be used in a manner that prevents potential interference from obstructions, including the relative placement of the user's body.
- 4.3.6. The use of a **fall arrest system** when available clearance is less than the **fall arrest systems'** required clearance shall not be graded as long as other performance principles are satisfied.

4.4. Positioning systems

- 4.4.1. Use of a **positioning system** shall be accompanied by an appropriate **fall arrest system**.
- 4.4.2. A **positioning system** shall be utilized when transitioning between **fall arrest systems** unless a candidate is standing on a platform.
- 4.4.3. *Free fall potential* of **positioning systems** shall not exceed 0.6 m (2 ft) or the maximum allowed by manufacturer, whichever is less.
 - 4.4.3.1. *Free fall potential* of **positioning systems** should not exceed 0.3 m (1 ft).

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5. Exercise Grading

- 5.1. Grading shall be based on a candidate's adherence to the performance principles of Section 4 throughout the fall protection evaluation.
- 5.2. Candidate performance is graded as a pass, *fail*, or *discrepancy*.
 - 5.2.1. A pass issued for a candidate's actions denotes satisfactory performance during an exercise.
 - 5.2.2. One *fail* issued for a candidate's actions constitutes failure of the fall protection evaluation.
 - 5.2.3. Three *discrepancies* issued for a candidate's actions constitute failure of the fall protection evaluation.
 - 5.2.3.1. Multiple *discrepancies* may be issued for a candidate's actions in one exercise.
- 5.3. The Evaluator of a fall protection evaluation has the sole authority to issue *discrepancies* and *fails*.
- 5.4. An explanation shall be provided for any issued *fail* or *discrepancy*.
- 5.5. Grades regarding candidate performance shall be issued prior to a candidate beginning a separate exercise.

6. Fall Protection Exercises

- 6.1. Energy Absorbing Lanyards and *backup system* exercise
 - 6.1.1. The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate:
 - 6.1.1.1. Use of energy absorbing lanyards.
 - 6.1.1.2. Installation and use of a *backup system*.
 - 6.1.1.3. Transitioning between *fall arrest systems* while using a *positioning system*.
 - 6.1.2. Exercise Requirements
 - 6.1.2.1. Candidate shall establish energy absorbing lanyards as their *fall arrest system*.
 - 6.1.2.2. Candidate shall climb up a structure a minimum of 3 m (9.9 ft).
 - 6.1.2.3. Candidate shall establish a *rope system* from or adjacent to the structure.
 - 6.1.2.4. Candidate shall transition to a *backup system* as their *fall arrest system*.
 - 6.1.2.5. Candidate shall climb down a structure a minimum of 2 m (6.6 ft).
 - 6.1.2.6. Candidate shall climb up a structure to the *anchorage system* of the *backup system*.
 - 6.1.2.7. Candidate shall transition to energy absorbing lanyards as their *fall arrest system*.
 - 6.1.2.8. Candidate shall deconstruct the *rope system*.
 - 6.1.2.9. Candidate shall climb down the structure.
- 6.2. Energy Absorbing Lanyards and *Descent mode* exercise
 - 6.2.1. The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate:
 - 6.2.1.1. Use of energy absorbing lanyards.
 - 6.2.1.2. Installation and use of a *rope access system* for descent.
 - 6.2.1.3. Short ascent with a *descender*.
 - 6.2.1.4. Transitioning into and out of a *rope access system*.
 - 6.2.2. Exercise Requirements
 - 6.2.2.1. Candidate shall establish energy absorbing lanyards as their *fall arrest system*.
 - 6.2.2.2. Candidate shall climb up a structure a minimum of 3.0 m (9.8 ft).
 - 6.2.2.3. Candidate shall establish a *two-rope system* from or adjacent to the structure.
 - 6.2.2.4. Candidate shall transition to *descent mode* on the *two-rope system*.
 - 6.2.2.5. Candidate shall descend a minimum of 2 m (6.6 ft).
 - 6.2.2.6. Prior to reaching a lower-level, candidate shall use the structure to ascend a minimum of 0.6 m (2 ft) with their *descender*.
 - 6.2.2.7. Candidate shall transition from their *descender* to another *positioning system*.

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6.2.2.8. Candidate shall remove their **positioning system** and climb up the structure to the **anchorage systems** of the **two-rope system**.

6.2.2.8.1. Candidate may utilize any effective **fall arrest system** for climbing up the structure.

6.2.2.9. Candidate shall deconstruct the **two-rope system**.

6.2.2.10. Candidate shall climb down the structure.

6.3. Overhead self-retracting device exercise

6.3.1. The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate:

6.3.1.1. Use of an overhead self-retracting device.

6.3.1.2. Transitioning between **fall arrest systems** while using a **positioning system**.

6.3.2. Exercise Requirements

6.3.2.1. Candidate shall establish an overhead self-retracting device as their **fall arrest system**.

6.3.2.2. Candidate shall climb up a structure a minimum of 3 m (9.9 ft).

6.3.2.3. Candidate shall transition to another appropriate **fall arrest system**.

6.3.2.4. Candidate shall climb up or down a structure a minimum of 1 m (3.3 ft)

6.3.2.5. Prior to reaching an upper- or lower-level, candidate shall transition to utilizing the overhead self-retracting device as their **fall arrest system**.

6.3.2.6. Candidate shall climb down the structure.

6.4. Personal self-retracting device exercise

6.4.1. The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate:

6.4.1.1. Use of personal self-retracting devices.

6.4.1.2. Use of a **positioning system**.

6.4.2. Exercise Requirements

6.4.2.1. Candidate shall establish a self-retracting device as their **fall arrest system**.

6.4.2.2. Candidate shall climb up a structure a minimum of 3 m (9.9 ft).

6.4.2.3. Candidate shall establish, adjust, and remove their **positioning system**.

6.4.2.4. Candidate shall climb down the structure.

6.5. Ladder safety system exercise

6.5.1. The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate:

6.5.1.1. Use of a ladder safety system.

6.5.1.2. Transitioning between **fall arrest systems** while using a **positioning system**.

6.5.2. Exercise Requirements

6.5.2.1. Candidate shall establish a ladder safety system as their **fall arrest system**.

6.5.2.2. Candidate shall climb up a structure a minimum of 3 m (9.9 ft).

6.5.2.3. Candidate shall transition to another appropriate **fall arrest system**.

6.5.2.3.1. If possible, the ladder safety device shall be removed from the carrier.

6.5.2.4. Candidate shall climb up or down a structure a minimum of 1 m (3.3 ft)

6.5.2.5. Prior to reaching an upper or lower-level, candidate shall transition to utilizing the ladder safety system as their **fall arrest system**.

6.5.2.6. Candidate shall climb down the structure.

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6.6. Horizontal lifeline exercise

6.6.1. The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate:

6.6.1.1. Use of a horizontal lifeline system.

6.6.1.2. Transitioning between **fall arrest systems** while using a **positioning system**.

6.6.2. Exercise Requirements

6.6.2.1. Candidate shall access a horizontal lifeline that is in a **fall zone** while utilizing an appropriate **fall arrest system**.

6.6.2.2. Candidate shall transition to utilizing the horizontal lifeline within their **fall arrest system**.

6.6.2.2.1. While a **positioning system** may be utilized to connect the candidate to the horizontal lifeline, an appropriate **fall arrest system** shall be utilized.

6.6.2.3. Candidate shall traverse the horizontal lifeline.

6.6.2.4. Candidate shall transition to another appropriate **fall arrest system**.

6.6.2.4.1. If horizontal lifeline was initially accessed from a **safe zone**, candidate shall transition back to utilizing the horizontal lifeline within their **fall arrest system**, and return to the **safe zone**.

6.7. **Travel restraint system** exercise

6.7.1. The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate:

6.7.1.1. Selection and use of appropriate equipment in a **travel restraint system**.

6.7.2. Exercise Requirements

6.7.2.1. Candidate shall establish a **travel restraint** system to a suitable **anchorage** or horizontal lifeline located in a **safe zone** on a platform.

6.7.2.2. Candidate shall demonstrate accessing a minimum length of 3 m (9.9 ft) of an exposed edge on a platform while maintaining an effective **travel restraint system**.

6.7.2.3. Candidate shall return to the **safe zone** of the platform.

7. Complaints and Appeals

- 7.1. In the case of a complaint or dispute, the aggrieved party should submit a written statement to the SPRAT Office detailing the circumstances of the complaint and requested action. The SPRAT Office shall forward all complaints and appeals to the Evaluations Committee and the Board of Directors.
- 7.2. Complaints and appeals will be considered and ruled on by the Evaluations Committee. A written response shall be provided to the aggrieved party and copied to the Board of Directors within 60 days of the written complaint. Any candidate affected by the decisions of the Evaluations Committee may choose to appeal to the Board of Directors.
- 7.3. The Board of Directors can choose to reconsider any action taken by the Evaluations Committee if the Board of Directors deems the action inconsistent with established certification requirements or finds the action inconsistent with the best interests of the membership.

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Appendix 1. New Defined Terms

A.1.1. **Fall arrest:** Stoppage from free fall.

A.1.2. **Fall arrest system:** Components used together in a manner to stop free fall of a worker or load.

A.1.3. **Fall protection:** Measures taken to physically prevent or stop free fall of a worker or load.

A.1.4. **Fall protection system:** Components used together in a manner to prevent or stop a free fall of a worker or load.

A.1.5. **Positioning system:** Components used together to support a worker and adjust their location while suspended.