

## WORK-AT-HEIGHT CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS



Society of Professional Rope Access Technicians

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Notes for Usage:

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](#).

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

Use 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 not 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 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 fundamental use of **fall protection systems**.
- 1.1.3. This document is intended for use by:
  - 1.1.3.1. **Employers** with 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 provides:
  - 1.2.1.1. Candidate **eligibility** requirements.
  - 1.2.1.2. Requirements to obtain a SPRAT work-at-height certification.
  - 1.2.1.3. **Performance principles** and **grading system** for a work-at-height evaluation.
  - 1.2.1.4. Six exercises using fall protection systems with a focus on:
    - 1.2.1.4.1. Minimizing free fall potential.
    - 1.2.1.4.2. Transitions between fall arrest systems.

### 1.3. Exceptions

- 1.3.1. The use of **fall arrest systems** for exposure 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. A performance-based evaluation is limited by the equipment and **fall protection systems** in use at the evaluation site and cannot address all knowledge and skill that may be applicable to all types of work requiring the use of **fall protection systems**.
- 1.3.4. 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.

## 2. Work-at-Height Certification

### 2.1. General Information

- 2.1.1. Successful completion of a work-at-height evaluation and written test components shall be required to obtain a SPRAT work-at-height certification.
- 2.1.2. Work-at-height evaluation and written test components shall be hosted and administered in accordance with policies and procedures maintained by the Evaluations Committee.

### 2.2. Work-at-Height Certification Process

- 2.2.1. An Evaluation Session Host shall host a work-at-height evaluation.
- 2.2.2. An evaluator shall administer the work-at-height evaluation.
- 2.2.3. A provisional result shall be issued to the candidate after the completion of the work-at-height evaluation.
- 2.2.4. Upon review of documentation demonstrating successful completion of requirements, SPRAT shall issue a work-at-height certification to a candidate.

### 2.3. Work-at-Height Certification Validity

- 2.3.1. Initial certification is valid for three years from the date of the work-at-height evaluation.
- 2.3.2. Any subsequent certification completed during the last 6 months of a current certification shall be valid for three years from the date of the current certification expiration.
  - 2.3.2.1. A subsequent certification completed outside of this period is valid for three years from the date of the work-at-height evaluation.

### 2.4. Work-at-Height Certification Revocation

- 2.4.1. SPRAT may, at its discretion revoke a certification.
  - 2.4.1.1. Causes for revocation include, but are not limited to:
    - 2.4.1.1.1. Fraud.
    - 2.4.1.1.2. Deceit.
    - 2.4.1.1.3. Submission of inaccurate data to obtain a certification.
- 2.4.2. Revocation of a certification shall follow the complaint process in accordance with Section 7.

## 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 work-at-height evaluation.
- 3.2.2. A candidate should receive training by a **competent trainer** within six months prior to participation in a subsequent work-at-height 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 work-at-height evaluation.
  - 3.2.3.2. Performance Principles of Section 4 and their application to exercises within Section 6.
  - 3.2.3.3. SPRAT's *Work-at-Height Evaluation Guidelines*.
  - 3.2.3.4. SPRAT's *Presiding Regulatory Authority Reference* information relevant to the location of the work-at-height evaluation.

## 4. Work-at-Height 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. Work-at-Height 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. **Fall protection systems** and equipment should be used in accordance with manufacturer instructions and recommendations.
  - 4.2.3.3. Harness attachments shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer.
  - 4.2.3.4. Harness attachments should be used in accordance with the **presiding regulatory authority** where the work-at-height evaluation is conducted.
- 4.2.4. Equipment shall be inspected before each use.

### 4.3. Fall protection systems

- 4.3.1. **Fall protection systems** shall be used in a manner that minimizes **free fall potential**.
- 4.3.2. Unless using a **travel restraint system**, a **fall arrest system** shall be used when a candidate is in a **fall zone**.
- 4.3.3. **Fall arrest systems** shall be used in a manner that minimizes potential **swing fall**.
- 4.3.4. **Fall arrest systems** shall be used in a manner that prevents potential interference from obstructions, including the relative placement of the user's body.
- 4.3.5. A positioning system shall be accompanied by a **fall arrest system**.
- 4.3.6. A **positioning system** shall be used during transitions between **fall arrest systems** unless a candidate is standing on a stable surface.
  - 4.3.6.1. **Free fall potential** of a **fall arrest systems** shall be further minimized during transitions.
  - 4.3.6.2. Transitions between **fall arrest systems** should be performed with sufficient available clearance.
- 4.3.7. Provided all other performance principles are satisfied, the use of a **fall arrest system** when available clearance is less than required clearance shall not affect grading.

## 5. Exercise Grading

- 5.1. Grading shall be based on a candidate's adherence to the performance principles of Section 4.
- 5.2. Candidate performance is graded as a Pass (P), **Fail** (F), or **Discrepancy** (D).
  - 5.2.1. Pass (P) denotes satisfactory performance during the exercise.
  - 5.2.2. One **Fail** (F) constitutes failure of the work-at-height evaluation.
  - 5.2.3. Three **Discrepancies** (D) constitutes failure of the work-at-height evaluation.
    - 5.2.3.1. Multiple **discrepancies** may be issued within one exercise.
- 5.3. The evaluator of a work-at-height evaluation has the sole authority to issue **fails** and **discrepancies**.
- 5.4. An explanation shall be provided for any issued **fail** or **discrepancy**.
- 5.5. Any **fail** or **discrepancy** shall be issued to a candidate prior to being assigned their next exercise.

## 6. Work-at-Height Requirements

### 6.1. Performance Principles

6.1.1. Candidate shall adhere to the performance principles in Section 4 throughout the work-at-height evaluation.

### 6.2. *Travel restraint system* exercise

6.2.1. Candidate shall construct a *travel restraint system*.

6.2.2. Candidate shall access at least 3 m (9.9 ft) of a platform edge with the *travel restraint system*.

6.2.3. Candidate shall disassemble the *travel restraint system*.

### 6.3. Overhead self-retracting device exercise

6.3.1. Candidate shall climb up a structure a minimum of 3 m (9.9 ft) with an overhead self-retracting device.

6.3.2. Candidate shall transition from the overhead self-retracting device to another *fall arrest system*.

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

6.3.4. Candidate shall transition from the other *fall arrest system* to the overhead self-retracting device.

6.3.5. Candidate shall climb down the structure with an overhead self-retracting device.

### 6.4. Ladder fall arrest system exercise

6.4.1. Candidate shall climb up a structure a minimum of 3 m (9.9 ft) with a ladder *fall arrest system*.

6.4.2. Candidate shall transition from the ladder fall arrest system to another *fall arrest system*.

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

6.4.4. Candidate shall transition from the other *fall arrest system* to the ladder *fall arrest system*.

6.4.5. Candidate shall climb down the structure with a ladder *fall arrest system*.

### 6.5. Horizontal lifeline exercise

6.5.1. Candidate shall use a *fall arrest system* to access a horizontal lifeline in a *fall zone*.

6.5.2. Candidate shall transition to incorporate a horizontal lifeline as part of their *fall arrest system*.

6.5.3. Candidate shall traverse a minimum of 3 m (9.9 ft) with the horizontal lifeline.

6.5.4. Candidate shall transition from the horizontal lifeline to another *fall arrest system*.

### 6.6. Energy absorbing lanyards and *backup system* exercise

6.6.1. Candidate shall climb up a structure a minimum of 3 m (9.9 ft) with energy absorbing lanyards.

6.6.2. Candidate shall construct a *rope system*.

6.6.3. Candidate shall transition from the energy absorbing lanyards to a *backup system*.

6.6.4. Candidate shall climb down and up the structure a minimum of 2 m (6.6 ft) with the *backup system*.

6.6.5. Candidate shall transition from the *backup system* to energy absorbing lanyards.

6.6.6. Candidate shall disassemble the *rope system*.

6.6.7. Candidate shall climb down the structure with energy absorbing lanyards.

### 6.7. Energy absorbing lanyards and *descent mode* exercise

6.7.1. Candidate shall climb up a structure a minimum of 3 m (9.9 ft) with energy absorbing lanyards.

6.7.2. Candidate shall construct a *two-rope system*.

6.7.3. Candidate shall transition from the energy absorbing lanyards to *descent mode* on the *two-rope system*.

6.7.4. Candidate shall descend a minimum of 2 m (6.6 ft) in *descent mode*.

6.7.5. Candidate shall ascend a minimum of 0.6 m (2 ft) in *descent mode*.

6.7.6. Candidate shall transition from *descent mode* to energy absorbing lanyards

6.7.7. Candidate shall disassemble the *two-rope system*.

6.7.8. Candidate shall climb down the structure with energy absorbing lanyards.

## **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.

## **Appendix 1. New Defined Terms**

A.1.1. **Fall arrest system:** A **fall protection system** configured to stop a fall.

A.1.2. **Fall protection:** Physical measures taken to reduce the chance or effects of a fall.

A.1.3. **Fall protection system:** Equipment configured to reduce the chance of a fall occurring or to reduce the effects of a fall.

A.1.4. **Positioning system:** A **fall protection system** configured to support or suspend an individual.