Tool tethering policy statement

This policy statement sets out the company's tool tethering standard which is to be adhered to on all construction projects.

1. Mandatory tool tethering
All tools are to be tethered when being used on Mace construction projects in the following situations:

• when working within four metres of an opening or edge of a structure
• working externally to a structure
• when working in a situation where a tool could fall a distance of more than one storey
• where there is a risk of tools falling more than one storey within a building (e.g. risers, stairwells, shafts, atria and entrance halls)
• any location where tools could fall into PPE free zones or a public area

2. Risk assessment and expectations
• All employers are required to carry out a risk assessment, following the hierarchy of fall prevention measures that will identify and specify the measures necessary to control the risk of tools from falling
• All personnel should have access to the risk assessment carried out by their employer
• In circumstances where an employer's assessment of the risks associated with carrying out a task identifies that the tethering of any tool increases the risk of injury, then an exemption to the use of a tool tether may be accepted by Mace

3. Tether suitability
Employers are responsible for providing tool tethers and ensuring they are appropriate for the tasks to be performed. Tools tethers must:

• be designed specifically for tethering and CE marked
• be provided with a test certificate to confirm the maximum weight of the tethered tool
• be matched to a tool that has been individually weighed to confirm it is within the maximum allowable
• be provided with a locking mechanism at the connection points.

Tools and tethers must not:

• be modified in anyway unless approved by the manufacturer
• increase the overall risk associated with the work activities and conditions

4. Inspection and maintenance
It is essential that tool tethers are inspected and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance. This should include the following as a minimum:

• a pre-use visual inspection by the user on a daily basis
• an inspection by a competent person at intervals determined by the suppliers/manufacturers with appropriate records kept
• a quarantine procedure for taking tools and/or tethers out of service when a defect is identified

5. Training and competence
Each person required to use or inspect a tool or tether must be trained and competent in the use, maintenance, inspection of tools and tethers and the arrangements for taking out of use when a defect is identified.

6. Compliance monitoring
The responsibility for ensuring tools and tethers are used correctly lies with the employer, who is expected to implement and maintain adequate monitoring and review arrangements.

Employers are expected to provide suitable tools and tethers and ensure an adequate level of management, supervision and monitoring is in place to meet the requirements laid out in this policy.

7. Consequences for offenders
• Persistent offenders will be removed from the project permanently until an acceptable improvement in safe behaviour has been demonstrated
• Employers who persistently fail to comply with the tool tethering policy statement and influence behaviours among their workforce, including sub-contractor or self-employed workers, will be subject to consequences that may affect their approval status to operate on Mace construction projects

8. Preventing increased risk of injury
• Where an employer’s risk assessment for an activity or a task identifies that the tethering of any tool increases the risk of injury, an exemption to the use of a tool tether may be accepted by Mace
• Subject to review by Mace, the employer may then brief the personnel for the task and proceed without the use of tool tethers identified in the risk assessment. The employer will maintain an adequate level of supervision to monitor compliance with the other control measures identified in the risk assessment and method statement and to ensure that the tool tethering policy is complied with on completion of the task to which the dispensation relates.

For and on behalf of the board

Mark Reynolds
Chief Executive
November 2013