

Retractable Ladders

Recommendations for their safe use in conjunction with the appropriate publications below.

Carry out regular inspections of the installation to check the following points:

That the unit is free from mechanical damage or distortion of the component parts.

That the unit is held positively by its retaining fixings, which are firmly in place and not corroded.

That any unit above 2500, used as an official “secondary means” is fitted with a Safety Cage or a Descent Controller to address H & S concerns (a mandatory legal requirement).

That any cage is held positively by its fixings and is free from damage or distortion.

That any Descent Controller has a secure hanging eye and if not attached to the eye, is properly stored near the access point.

That when the unit is opened, the outer stringer is not obstructed and the treads are near horizontal.

That the unit is not painted; paint can cause it to seize up.

That the access area is clean and not obstructed.

That the treads and stiles are clean and free from grease, mud, etc.

That the exit area is clean and not obstructed.

That the unit at ground level is protected from vehicles.

That the hinge pins are lubricated and that the unit opens & closes smoothly.

That the latch, if present, is lubricated and operates correctly.

That all labels remain in place and legible.

That regular fire drills are carried out so that any persons involved are familiar with all routines.

That those persons doing fire drills are wearing suitable footwear, which is in good condition.

That the unit is not used as a short cut, but only for its intended purpose.

That the unit is not used by persons carrying anything which does not leave both hands free.

That when used, escapees can only step onto the unit.

HSE Publications

Management of health and safety at work 1992, Code of Practice, L21: ISBN 0 7176 0412 8

Workplace health, safety and welfare 1992, Code of Practice & guidance: ISBN 0 7176 0413 6

Managing construction for health and safety 1994, Code of Practice, L54: ISBN 0 7176 0792 5

Safe erection of structures 1985 site management & procedures, GS28/2: ISBN 0 11 883605 6

Safe erection of structures 1986, working places & access, GS28/3: ISBN 0 11 883530 0

Health and Safety in roof work 1988, HSG33: ISBN 0 7176 1425 5

Health and Safety in Construction 1996, HSG150: ISBN 0 7176 1143 4

General access scaffolds and ladders 1997, Information Sheet, CIS49

Tower Scaffolds 1997, Information Sheet, CIS10

<http://www.hse.gov.uk>

HSE Books, PO Box 1999, SUDBURY, Suffolk, CO10 2WA

Tel: 01787 881 165 - Fax: 01787 313 995.

Other Publications:

The Ladder Users Handbook, 1995, DTI, 1531/550K/3.95/NP: URN 95/577

Ladders: Specification for requirements, testing, marking, 1993: BS EN 131-2

Portable aluminium ladders, trestles and lightweight staging, 1994: BS 2037