

SUSPENDED/FACADE ACCESS EQUIPMENT (SAE) – CRADLES ETC.

Supervising window cleaning cradle work and more.

Although training is usually provided by the supplier/cradle owner

Working at Height is governed by the Work at Height Regulations 2005

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height/index.htm> When considering working at height from a cradle the Regulation goals should be applied to ensure that no-one is at risk of a fall liable to cause personal injury.

This is a specialised window cleaning task, and you must ensure that only competent and properly trained and instructed operators use this equipment. Users must ensure:

- The manufacturers safe working load is NEVER exceeded by the weight of people and equipment
- The equipment is not used in weather conditions outside the manufacturers 'safe' quoted ranges
- They use suitable fall prevention/fall arrest equipment e.g. a full body harness with energy absorbing lanyards. Such equipment should conform to relevant standards.
- All tools and equipment taken into the cradle are secured e.g. by suitable lanyard.

Good organisation, planning and appropriate supervision are essential.

Planning must include planning for emergencies and rescue.

Addressing your specific points: Supervision is required, and to be able to do this properly, the person undertaking the task must be knowledgeable in the activity and the correct way that this should be carried out.

Standing on the roof can only be from a place of safety, such that apart from the initial start-up and lowering over the edge, any further work will most likely be out of sight of the roof.

The supervisor must not put himself in danger of a fall just to view what is going on. Perhaps viewing the work through the windows of lower floors is a safer and more revealing option, or by observing from the ground. Certainly, knowledge of correctly operating the system would be required, and attending the training course of operatives would provide this.

An emergency plan must be put in place for both stranded operatives in the cradle, conscious or unconscious, and for any faller out of the cradle. Rescue of persons must not rely on the emergency services. For any person caught in a fall triggering harness suspension there is the further risk of harm if not safely rescued in the shortest possible time.

This HSE site shows what you, as an employer, need to do to protect your employees when they work at height: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/cleaning/topics/special-access-equip.htm>

Further information is available from [Specialist Access Engineering and Maintenance Association \(SAEMA\)](https://www.saema.org/). (<https://www.saema.org/>)

Inspecting Fall Arrest Equipment: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg367.pdf>