



MEWP FAMILIARISATION TOOLBOX TALK

WHEN IS A FAMILIARISATION REQUIRED?

A familiarisation is required on any Mobile Elevating Work Platform (MEWP) that is significantly different in weight, height, length or complexity to the MEWP on which training took place. The operator, supervisor, nominated ground rescue personnel, service engineer/technician and demonstrator all need adequate familiarisations to undertake their duties.

WHY ARE FAMILIARISATIONS IMPORTANT?

Before being authorised to operate a MEWP, the operator should successfully complete a MEWP operator training course to the applicable classification. Familiarisation is NOT operator training or a Verification of Competence (VOC), it is additional information an operator should obtain in order to safely operate a MEWP.

There are many different MEWP manufacturers, models and features, so it is critically important that operators are familiarised on any MEWP they are unfamiliar with. Failure to provide an adequate familiarisation may increase the risk of death or serious injury to the platform occupants and personnel at ground level, as well as damage to the MEWP, property, and the environment.

WHO CAN DELIVER A FAMILIARISATION?

A familiarisation should be conducted by a competent, authorised person. However, an operator can self-familiarise themselves with a MEWP if they have the current manufacturer's operator manual, adequate experience, time, and information to competently assess the task and risks.

WHAT DO USERS/EMPLOYERS NEED TO DO BEFORE A MEWP IS OPERATED?

- Confirm the operator has valid, in-date, operator training documentation, and the correct category for the type of MEWP to be used

WHO NEEDS TO KNOW?

This Toolbox Talk applies to all individuals involved with the safe operation of a MEWP. This includes:

- User (the person who has control of the MEWP on site)
- Managers, supervisors and demonstrators
- The MEWP operator
- Nominated ground control rescue personnel

- Arrange the familiarisation for the MEWP operator and nominated ground control rescue personnel
- Ensure the familiarisation is documented
- Arrange additional retraining or familiarisation if necessary

WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN A FAMILIARISATION?

- Confirmation that the MEWP has an operator's manual available
- The location of the data/compliance plate
- Evidence of a periodic inspection or thorough examination
- The platform/ground emergency/auxiliary lowering controls position, function, and operation
- Manufacturer's instructions and warning decals
- Operating characteristics and limitations
- Visual inspections and pre-use checks
- The layout and use of the ground and platform controls, including the auxiliary system (if fitted)
- Safety functions and safety devices
- How to check and reset the secondary guarding system (if fitted)
- Any stabilisation systems that are fitted
- The position of the lanyard anchorage points in the platform
- The importance of recording the familiarisation and pre-use checks (e.g., the IPAF ePAL app)
- Any item specified by the MEWP manufacturer

NOMINATED GROUND CONTROL RESCUE PERSONNEL

- Should be familiarised with the ground controls and emergency/auxiliary lowering controls
- Ensure there is clear access to the ground controls and emergency lowering controls
- Have means of raising the alarm in case of an emergency
- Should be capable of safely lowering the platform in case of an emergency

USEFUL REFERENCES

- IPAF Operators Safety Guide
- Manufacturer Operators Manual (available via www.ipaf.org/manufacturers)
- IPAF Technical Guidance F1: Familiarisation
- IPAF ePAL app