

MS – Toolbox Meeting Records			MRG-CF-TCR-07
Rev: 2.0	Next Rev Date: July 2028	Issue Date: July 2024	

Toolbox Talk No: 288			
Issue:	Safe Use of Ladders		
Location:	Via SMS Text Message, MRG Employee Portal	Date:	19/02/2026
Briefed by:	Via SMS and Portal	Time:	10.30
Points Raised and Comments			
<p>Purpose of this Talk Ladders are commonly used across rail works for access to elevated areas; however, improper use can result in falls, serious injury, or contact with live electrical infrastructure. This toolbox talk outlines the safe selection, setup, and use of ladders within the rail corridor and construction environments.</p> <p>Why Ladder Safety is Critical in Rail Environments Rail works often involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uneven ballast surfaces • Limited access and restricted clearances • Overhead electrical wiring (OHW) • Night works and reduced visibility <p>These conditions significantly increase the risk of falls and electrical hazards when using ladders.</p> <p>Common Hazards / Causes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unstable ladder placement on uneven or soft ground • Overreaching or leaning outside ladder rails • Using damaged or non-compliant ladders • Working near live overhead electrical lines • Carrying tools while climbing • Inadequate securing or footing of the ladder <p>Mandatory Safety Controls Selection of Ladders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use only industrial-rated ladders compliant with Australian Standards (AS/NZS). • Ensure ladders are suitable for the task (height, type, load rating). • Non-conductive (fibreglass) ladders must be used near electrical hazards. <p>Inspection Inspect ladders before use for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cracks, bends, or damage • Worn feet or missing components • Contamination (oil, grease, mud) <p>Tag out and remove defective ladders from service immediately.</p> <p>Setup & Positioning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place ladders on stable, level ground (use ladder feet or stabilisers where required). • Maintain correct angle (4:1 ratio – 1 metre out for every 4 metres up). • Secure ladders at the top and/or bottom where possible. • Keep clear of rail tracks, access paths, and live rail exclusion zones. 			

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Safe Use

- Maintain three points of contact at all times.
- Do not overreach—keep your body centred between ladder rails.
- Only one person on a ladder unless designed otherwise.
- Do not carry tools while climbing—use tool belts or lifting methods.
- Never use ladders in high winds or unsafe weather conditions.

Working Near Rail & Electrical Assets

- Maintain minimum approach distances from overhead wiring (OHV).
- Never position ladders where they can fall onto live rail or electrical systems.
- Confirm isolation where required before working near electrical assets.

Supervisor Responsibilities

- Ensure correct ladder selection and condition.
- Verify safe setup and compliance with SWMS.
- Monitor works near rail and electrical hazards.
- Stop unsafe ladder use immediately.

Worker Responsibilities

- Inspect ladders before use.
- Follow safe setup and use procedures.
- Report damaged or unsafe equipment.
- Do not take shortcuts when working at height.

Stop Work Authority

Stop work immediately if:

- Ladder is unstable or damaged
- Ground conditions are unsafe
- Electrical hazards are present without control measures
- Weather conditions create risk (wind, rain, poor visibility)

Emergency Procedures

- In the event of a fall, do not move the injured person unless safe to do so.
- Contact Supervisor immediately and call 000 if required.
- Provide first aid if trained.
- Secure the area and preserve the scene.

Key Takeaways

- Ladders are a last resort—use safer access methods where possible.
- Always inspect, secure, and position ladders correctly.
- Maintain three points of contact—no exceptions.
- Be aware of rail and electrical hazards at all times.
- Work safely and look out for your mates.

If you are unsure what to do following an incident, please contact:
Michael Petrovski 0478 983 823 or Chris Cakovski 0434 531 255