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Technical Bulletin

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Use of Self-Retracting Devices in Aerial Work Platforms (AWPs) — Canada

Description

The use of 3M™ DBI-SALA(R) Self-Retracting Devices (SRDs), also referred to as Self-Retracting Lifelines (SRLs), for fall protection while working in aerial work platforms (AWPs) is permissible provided the criteria contained in this bulletin are adhered to. However, SRDs generally will not restrain a user from falling out of the platform.

In most Provincial jurisdictions, restraining the user against ejection from the AWP is the main requirement when the device is in motion of any kind. If restraining the user from ejection is necessary, a positioning lanyard of an appropriate length shall be used. The positioning lanyard must be approved to CSA Z259.11-17. Neither an SRD nor an energy absorbing lanyard can be used for the purpose of positioning. Once on station and the AWP is no longer in motion, the user can transition to an SRD or energy absorbing lanyard to complete their required work task.

The following guidelines must be followed when using SRDs in aerial work platforms when on station:

1) The aerial work platform must have a guardrail system and a securable gate around its perimeter unless the anchorage level for the SRD is overhead. A suitably designed anchorage must be available for each SRD as part of the platform.
2) Swing fall hazards may exist, especially when working near corners, or out away from the SRD. Added fall clearance may be required, depending on the swing fall hazard.
3) For situations where the SRD is mounted below shoulder height, an SRL-LE model, as defined by CSA Z259.2.2-17 must be used to reduce the risk of damaging the lifeline should a fall occur over the guardrail.
4) Even with the use of an SRL-LE, sharp edges which the lifeline may contact during a fall could cut or damage the SRL's lifeline. Sharp edges must be avoided or protected from contact with the SRL-LE lifeline. Falls where the lifeline may slide along a sharp edge must be guarded against.
5) The lifeline extension speed of the SRL must reach a speed of approximately 4.5 feet per second, before the brake will engage and arrest a fall. If a user fails to reach a speed of approximately 4.5 feet per second, the SRL may not engage to arrest the fall. Example: This may occur when sliding down a low sloped roof surface, essentially restricting the travel or descent speed needed engage the SRD braking system.
6) All applicable user instruction manuals must be reviewed and followed.
7) Employee training must be conducted to help ensure a safe working environment.
8) Consult appropriate federal, provincial and local regulations regarding fall protection for aerial work platforms before selecting fall protection equipment for this purpose.

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