



FAQ G013 - Can I use a crane structure or hook as a Fall Arrest Point?

As legislation is risk based and goal setting, in that it states what you must do but does not offer the specific means of how you achieve it, then before undertaking any work at height, a thorough risk assessment must be conducted. Based on the findings, a safe system of work should be developed, which must also include appropriate rescue plans. All risk assessments should be formally documented and reviewed at regular intervals or whenever significant changes occur.

The risk assessment should detail the justification for the selection of equipment. Priority should be given to equipment specifically designed for the task. However, in some cases this may not be possible, perhaps due to risks imposed by the specific conditions of use. In which case other equipment can be used, such as a crane hook, provided it is thoroughly assessed and found to be fit for purpose.

For example, does the crane hook meet the requirements of a fall arrest anchor point in accordance with (for example), EN 795 or equivalent PPE standards? Does the crane have free fall capability lock out. Can prevention of crane functions that would affect the safety of use as fall arrest be achieved, etc.?

If the answer is yes, evidence of this should be included in the Risk Assessment/Method Statement. If the answer is no, then a suitable alternative method should be sought and used.

If the crane OEM's instructions for use allow the crane to be used as a fall arrest anchor then you should also consider the following –

- Any work at height, whether or not it is a mobile crane or any other crane structure, should be planned to either eliminate the need for work at height or, where this is not possible, to reduce the risk to persons to as low as is possible.
- Planning for work at height must include provisions for emergency response and rescue. Priority should be given to collective fall protection measures—such as scaffolding or powered access equipment like MEWPs—before considering personal fall protection systems. Therefore we would recommend that you review your existing risk assessment(s) to ensure that all possible eventualities have been considered.

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