



IPAF Guidance for Second Party Inspection Bodies

Periodic In-Service Inspection/Thorough
Examination of Mobile Elevating Work
Platforms (MEWPs)

Introduction

1. Different legal requirements and working practices exist in countries throughout the world. Nevertheless, it is common practice in many countries to employ 2nd parties to carry out periodic in-service inspection of mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs). In this industry, a 2nd party is typically an in-house engineer who has the necessary independence and impartiality. In-service inspection is called “*thorough examination*” in UK law.
2. This guidance is intended to assist companies to demonstrate the independence, impartiality and integrity of the 2nd party inspection/examination bodies that they employ. These attributes are essential for a 2nd party inspection/examination body if they are to demonstrate that they can work in a professional and confidential manner without influence from other potentially competing pressures that could affect their judgements and the results of the periodic in-service inspection/thorough examinations they manage or carry out.

What is periodic in-service inspection/thorough examination?

3. Periodic in-service inspection/thorough examination is independent from and has a different purpose to daily checks and maintenance inspections. It is required by law in many countries and is required to be carried out at specified intervals.
4. In-service inspection/thorough examination provides a periodic safety assessment by a competent person of the complete MEWP. Its purpose is to establish whether or not a MEWP has existing or developing defects or faults that could affect safety in use and to make recommendations on any actions that in the opinion of the competent person are necessary to maintain the MEWP in safe operating condition.

What is a competent person?

5. Competent person is the term used in this Code of Practice for any person who manages or defines the scope and nature of a periodic in-service inspection/thorough examination scheme or who conducts a periodic in-service inspection/thorough examination.

What is a 2nd party?

6. EN ISO-IEC 17020-2004, i.e. *Criteria for operation of inspection bodies*, provides guidance on good practice in periodic in-service inspection/thorough examination and defines two types of 2nd party competent person, as follows:-
 - i. *Type B – the inspection body forms a separate and identifiable part of an organisation involved in the design, manufacture, supply, installation, use or maintenance of the items it inspects or of similar competitive items and has been established to supply inspection services to its parent organisation, and*

- ii. *Type C - the inspection body is involved in the design, manufacture, supply, installation, use or maintenance of the items it inspects or of similar competitive items and may supply inspection services to other parties not being its parent organisation.*

What is the purpose of periodic in-service inspection/thorough examination?

7. Periodic in-service inspection/thorough examination is intended to:
- verify that the MEWP is operating as intended;
 - identify defects or weaknesses which could compromise the safety of the MEWP when lifting, lowering, travelling or supporting people and/or loads in the platform;
 - specify the time-scales within which identified defects or weaknesses need to be rectified;
 - establish that defects identified in the previous report of inspection/thorough examination have received attention;
 - assess the correct function of all safety devices;
 - check that warning notices are correctly fixed and legible; and
 - where necessary, following the inspection/thorough examination, specify any limitations on the use of the MEWP.

What are the essential characteristics of a 2nd party inspection/thorough examination system?

8. Competent persons who conduct periodic in-service inspection/thorough examination on MEWPs should be capable of detecting defects or weaknesses for the purpose of the inspection/examination. They should have sufficient qualifications, knowledge and experience to assess the importance of defects or weaknesses and to recommend what actions need to be taken to rectify them along with necessary timescales for action. Competent persons trained and holding cards issued under the IPAF CAP scheme will have these attributes
9. The reporting lines within the organisations in which the competent persons work should be identified and be separate from other aspects of work that they are expected to perform that could compete with their in-service inspection/thorough examination duties. For example, people who have responsibility for periodic in-service inspection/thorough examination activities should not be responsible for periodic maintenance activities on the same MEWPs.
10. Systems should be in place to ensure the quality and consistency of the competent person's professional development. These systems should include legal, technical and administrative training appropriate for the role of the competent person. They should include knowledge of the law associated with periodic in-service inspection/thorough examination, the legal responsibilities of the competent person, how to communicate with clients and what procedures to follow when conducting and reporting on inspection/examinations.

11. Systems should be in place to ensure the proper administration of the inspection/examination activities. These systems should include guidance on the procedures to follow when:-
- i. making arrangements for an inspection/examination to be carried out,
 - ii. carrying out the inspection/examination,
 - iii. reporting on the inspection/examination,
 - iv. forwarding the inspection/examination report to the client, their parent organisation and, when necessary, the authorities,
 - v. handling and retaining inspection/examination reports within the 2nd party's organisation [*Note: In the UK thorough examination reports should be retained for a minimum of 2 years*], and
 - vi. handling and acting on feedback from clients and employees, particularly where corrective action is needed.
12. Suitable and adequate facilities and equipment shall be provided by the 2nd party to allow all inspection/examination activities to be carried out effectively and safely on the range of MEWPs covered.
13. Equipment used in periodic in-service inspection/thorough examination shall be maintained to ensure its effectiveness and safety at all times. Measuring equipment shall be calibrated at suitable intervals to ensure its accuracy whenever it is used. Procedures shall be in place for:-
- i. reporting defects in equipment,
 - ii. repairing defective equipment, and
 - iii. disposing of defective equipment when repair is not appropriate.

An internal quality system should be in place and its effectiveness reviewed periodically. Periodic checks shall be made in accordance with the quality system to verify that the 2nd party's procedures are being followed by all involved.



The International Powered Access Federation (IPAF) promotes the safe and effective use of powered access equipment worldwide. IPAF is a not-for-profit members' organisation that represents the interests of manufacturers, distributors, users, and rental and training companies.

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Ref. UKAT 02/09-001