

## Risk Assessment – Abseiling (on-site, purpose built structures)

Baseline	<del>X</del>	Site Specific		Vulnerable Person		Temporary		Version	2020.1.0	Date of issue:	20/01/2020
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### Operating notes:

- Abseil activities should be understood to refer to activities within Kingswood whereby a participant is abseiling (descending an abseil rope whilst being belayed on a safety rope by Kingswood staff) from a purpose built structure. The Kingswood staff are also off the ground, although will never be required to leave the security of the platform they are working from to perform an emergency procedure.
- This risk assessment does not cover Kingswood staff accessing the structure for routine inspection and maintenance. Please see the 'Work at Height inspections / maintenance' risk assessment.
- Structure and equipment must be managed as per the Kingswood Equipment Management Standards.
  - As there is a small risk of items falling from the tower platform helmets must be worn by all staff, participants and accompanying adults.
- Supervision Ratios: 1 Abseil Leader plus 1 Abseil Assistant to 2 active participants with 1 additional accompanying adult supervising group.
- The maximum number of people allowed on the structure is to be written in the site specific risk assessment.
- **Participants** - The Abseil activity should not be used by anyone (including all staff, participants and accompanying adults) that is/has:
  - Weight over 120kg (285lbs)
  - Pregnant (unless doctor's advice has been sought)
  - Any type of heart condition or heart-related issues (unless doctor's advice has been sought)
  - Any type of spinal injury or weak spine condition (unless doctor's advice has been sought)

### Qualifications/ Competence:

- Abseil Leaders and Abseil Assistants must be in-house assessed by an MIA or ERCA trainer; or have a relevant NGB qualification plus approval from the Internal Technical Advisor; or be a Kingswood Ropes Trainer as approved by the Internal Technical Advisor
- The Nominated Chief Instructor must be onsite during all roped activity operations; they must hold a relevant NGB award.
- All Abseil Leaders and Abseil Assistants must have their first session observed and then frequently as per the Coaching Guidelines.
- All Abseil Leaders are required to maintain their skill level and must attend a rescue refresh every 3 months and after lengthy periods of shut down.
- All Abseil Assistants are required to maintain their skill level and must attend a refresh every 12 months and after lengthy periods of shut down.

### Risk – Benefit Statement:

There is a low 'real' risk of injury during Abseil but a high 'perceived' risk allowing a greater basis for learning.

Hazard Description and activities giving rise to risk	Who may be harmed	Control Measures	Risk Rating
Adverse weather – Lightning or High Winds	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff must follow the ROSPA 30/30 rule for lightning.</li> <li>If lightning occurs suddenly then the group should vacate the area immediately.</li> </ul>	Low
Unauthorised access	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access points to roped activity structures must be secured against casual or unauthorised access when the equipment is not in use.</li> <li>Brief the group to stay off all activity equipment unless supervised by Kingswood staff.</li> </ul>	Low`
Incorrect Belay Setup	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check your belay setup is correct and in line with the system you have been trained and assessed to use.</li> <li>The second member of Kingswood must see this check and be able to confirm a check was carried out.</li> </ul>	Low
Incorrectly fitted helmet	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helmets must be worn correctly as per the manufacturers guidelines by all persons within the designated area</li> <li>Every effort must be made to get participants to wear a helmet. However, this may present difficulties for those who wear a turban or other similar head covering. Participants in this activity who are wearing a full 'pagri' turban are exempt from wearing a helmet, as the turban should control sufficiently the risks that the helmet would otherwise guard against. This exemption does not apply to participants who are wearing a 'patka' or lighter cloth head covering, with or without a top-knot. These individuals must wear a helmet, and provision should be made for a private area where these participants can remove or adjust their patka in order to fit the helmet.</li> <li>Where a turban is worn in place of a helmet, special care must be taken to ensure that there is no risk of any loose cloth getting entangled in equipment or apparatus.</li> </ul>	Low
Unsecure attachment to safety rope or Incorrectly fitted harness	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sit harnesses are to be correctly fitted (waist loop tight above the hips and legs loops tight)</li> <li>A chest harness must be worn when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The participant does not have defined hips</li> <li>The participant has a fairly prominent upper body/stomach and no hip definition (disability or over-weight)</li> <li>When large clothing has been tucked into the harness preventing defined hips to be seen</li> <li>There is a medical reason that suggests the participant may faint/collapse</li> <li>Very top heavy, so inversion is likely</li> </ul> </li> <li>The use of a DMM Bridge is the only approved method of connecting a chest and sit harness using a captive karabiner.</li> <li>The safety rope must be attached to the Bridge Sling or directly to sit harness (When a chest harness is not being worn) using a captive karabiner.</li> <li>Check the active participant's PPE and roped attachment twice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When attaching the safety rope - This check should be visual and verbal for all group members to observe.</li> <li>Immediately prior to descending - The belaying Instructor must complete a final tactile inspection prior to any participant leaving the platform</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Low

Hazard Description and activities giving rise to risk	Who may be harmed	Control Measures	Risk Rating
Impact with ground or other obstacle	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief participant on the most effective way of negotiating the Abseil. Highlight any specific elements of the facility in use. E.g. change in angle of abseil face.</li> <li>• Belay the participant as trained to prevent a significant fall or impact.</li> </ul>	Low
Falls from height	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anyone operating at height outside of guard rails must be suitably attached to a safety line.</li> <li>• Brief the participants on the correct way to access the platform</li> <li>• Anyone climbing ladders must have their hands free at all times – Equipment must be attached to harnesses or carried in a bag</li> </ul>	Low
Entrapment	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief and check the participant has tucked away and secured any loose or baggy clothing.</li> <li>• Brief and check the participant has removed any large or dangly jewelry.</li> <li>• Brief and check the participant has tied back / secured long hair</li> <li>• Kingswood staff must check themselves for the above as well</li> </ul>	Low