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MISUSE OF ACCESS PLATFORM DECKING SYSTEMS

What is the risk?

Misusing Access Platform Decking Systems has the potential to damage the component parts which could lead to system failure. The results of this could be serious injury to site workers, damage to materials and structures, lost time and expense.

Types of misuse

- **Overloading** - placing too much weight on the system (over the max load rating specified by the manufacturer);
- **Point loading** - placing all the load in a small area of the system rather than uniformly distributing the load and exceeding the Manufacturers' maximum load rating;
- **Tampering** - adjustment / removal of installed system components, altering the installed system configuration, altering the supporting structure or making permanent changes to system components. Tampering with a Temporary Safety System contravenes Section 8 of The Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974;
- **Unintended use** - using system components to support other pieces of equipment or as temporary trackways / roads etc.

Consequences of misuse

Using Access Platform Decking Systems beyond the limits set by the manufacturer can cause immediate failure of the system as well as weakening of components. Damage to components may go undetected and lead to future, unexpected system failure. Any system that fails has the potential to cause serious injury, property damage, equipment damage and result in lost time and expense.

What to do if you see misuse

- Report the misuse to a supervisor / site manager;
- Stop using the system until the issue has been rectified;
- Ask a trained and authorised person to inspect the system for missing components and / or damage;
- Ask a trained and authorised person to replace missing or damage components;
- Only use the system again once it has been handed over again.

Good and bad practice...



Above left - Good practice: system loaded out over the vertical posts, uniformly distributed and within the load limit as set by the manufacturer.

5 KEY POINTS

APD Misuse can cause:

1. Serious injury to workers
2. Damage to materials and structures
3. Unexpected system failure
4. Lost time
5. Greater expense

Useful references:

- FASET APD-01 Inspection Requirements for Platform Decking
- FASET Access Platform Decking Guidance Note
- The Health and Safety At Work Etc. Act 1974

