

<b>DEFENCE INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTICES</b> (Not to be communicated to anyone outside HM Service without authority)	
<b>Title:</b>	Regulations for the Use of Mobile Climbing Towers
<b>Audience:</b>	Recruiting, Cadet Force and other MOD Personnel Responsible for Maintaining Safety Standards of Mobile Climbing Towers
<b>Applies:</b>	Immediately
<b>Expires:</b>	When rescinded or replaced
<b>Replaces:</b>	2008DIN06-033
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<b>Channel:</b>	07 Training and Education
<b>Subject:</b>	Physical Development Safety Policy
<b>Content:</b>	Regulations to ensure the safe use of Mobile Climbing Towers
<b>Sponsor:</b>	Land Forces Directorate Training (Army), PD Branch SO2 AT
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<b>Classification:</b>	UNCLASSIFIED

### **General**

1. Mobile Climbing Towers (MCT) have become a popular means to introduce young people to climbing and abseiling; by their very nature MCT are designed to allow organisations to transport a climbing facility to its target audience and are therefore primarily utilised in the Services by recruiting organisations and Cadet Forces. In addition some MCT are equipped with an Automatic Belay Device (ABD), which removes the requirement for separate climbing ropes.

### **Applicability**

2. These regulations apply to all Service organisations using MCT when 'on duty'.
3. The regulations regarding static Artificial Climbing (AC) walls are contained in 2010DIN07-166.

### **Insurance**

4. In general terms, the MOD accepts liability for the acts or omissions of those Service personnel who are involved in properly authorized climbing activities conducted in accordance with current regulations. Such participation carries 'Duty' status which applies to all authorized military activities during the period of the specified training.

5. It should be noted that the word 'liability', as it is used throughout this DIN, refers to the legal obligation to pay compensation for injury or damage, which has been caused by a negligent act or omission.

6. Participants are strongly advised to purchase personal insurance to cover any eventuality for which the MOD would not be legally liable i.e. 'off duty' activities. This personal premium is not to be paid from public funds.

7. Recruiting Teams that have mobile climbing towers for use at public events are to ensure that the MOD is suitably covered by an appropriate in date Public Liability insurance policy. A copy of the insurance certificate should be on display or available for inspection with the MCT SI/SOP

### **Operation of MCT**

8. In order to operate an MCT safely, individuals must be trained in the towing, siting and erecting of an MCT. Although there is no recognised formal qualification for operating an MCT, it is imperative that a competent person is nominated to carry out these tasks: a competent person is defined as being an individual that has received adequate training in the towing, siting and erection of an MCT. This training should be conducted where possible by the supplier or an individual deemed competent by the supplier to deliver such training. In addition annual refresher training is to take place and a formal record of all training is to be kept by the individual and a copy filed by the unit for audit purposes. Once an individual is posted from the organisation, or 6 months after last operating an MCT, whichever is the sooner, the competency becomes invalid.

### **Qualifications to Supervise Climbing Activities on MCT**

9. The awards detailed below are the approved qualifications required to supervise single-pitch climbing and abseiling activities on MCT.

a. Military.

- (1) Joint Service Rock Leader Training (RLT) - subject to logbook recommendations/caveats appended by the qualifying Centre.
- (2) Joint Service Rock Climbing Leader (RCL).
- (3) Joint Service Rock Climbing Instructor (RCI).
- (4) RM Mountain Leader (1) & (2).

b. Civilian.

- (1) Mountain Leader Training England/Northern Ireland/Scotland/Wales (MLTE/NI/S/W) - Climbing Wall Award (CWA) - (only for climbing).
- (2) MLTE/NI/S/W CWA Module 2 for Top Access or Abseiling.
- (3) MLTE/NI/S/W Single Pitch Award (SPA).
- (4) Mountain Instructor Award (MIA).
- (5) Mountain Instructor Certificate (MIC).

(6) International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations (IFMGA) qualified Guide.

### **MCT Equipped with an Automatic Belay Device (ABD)**

10. Service Recruiting Teams and Cadet Forces are given the following dispensation to supervise climbing activities on an MCT equipped with an ABD. Individuals nominated as supervisors are to hold one of the qualifications at Para 9, or to have successfully completed the Cadet Forces MCT Award course which gives specific MCT and ABD training. This training may be delivered by individuals holding either an MIA or higher award or a Rock Climbing Instructor (RCI) who has further completed the Cadet Forces MCT Providers course. The training is to include the following subjects:

- a. Wear and adjust the required safety equipment correctly.
- b. Teach participants how to wear the required safety equipment correctly.
- c. Maintain a safe perimeter to the MCT.
- d. Connect participants to and disconnect them from the ABD safely.
- e. Coach students in the safe manner to climb and descend the MCT.
- f. Solve problems that climbers may cause when using the MCT.
- g. Complete the course reporting procedures.

11. This dispensation is limited to the specific type and make of equipment used to deliver the training, and is not a qualification that can be utilised to supervise climbing activities on a static AC wall or natural rock.

12. Service Recruiting Teams using mobile climbing towers at public events are to conduct annual refresher training. Refresher training is to take place once a year immediately prior to the season for attending recruiting events. All refresher training is to be recorded in individual logbooks and signed by the instructor responsible for delivering the training.

### **Supervisor/Student Ratios**

13. The supervisor to student ratio for MCT climbing activities are as follows:

- a. MCT equipped with ABD
  - (1) Individuals qualified in accordance with Para 9 - 1:3.
  - (2) Individuals that have undergone specific MCT and ABD training as described at Para 10 - 1:3
- b. MCT not equipped with ABD
  - (1) Individuals qualified in accordance with Para 9 - 1:6 (3 climbers and 3 belayers).

14. Service personnel who have successfully completed Rock Climbing Proficiency (RCP) may operate as equals whilst climbing on an MCT, provided they have read and understood the relevant Standing Instructions/Standard Operating Procedures (SIs/SOPs).

### **Solo Climbing**

15. Solo climbing is defined as climbing without the use of safety equipment and as such is forbidden on MCT.

### **Safety Instructions**

16. Organisations utilising MCT are to issue SIs/SOPs, a copy of which is to be kept with the MCT at all times and are to be read by all supervisors prior to any training commencing.

17. Safety is of paramount importance and is to take precedence over all other considerations. It is the responsibility of the supervisor/instructor conducting the activities to ensure that there is full compliance with the SIs/SOPs for the use of MCT and any other instructions necessary for the safe conduct of the activities.

18. In accordance with JSP 375, written Risk Assessments are to be completed for activities planned on all MCT.

19. The immediate floor area below the climbing wall, to a distance of 3 metres, is to be kept clear of all hazards, including equipment, spectators and those not climbing. All outrigger leg uprights are to be covered by protector pads.

### **Inspections**

20. The inspection regime for AC walls is as follows:

#### **a. MCT Manager Responsibilities**

(1) All MCT are to be inspected by a competent person in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and a record maintained by the unit.

(2) All fixtures and fittings, including all weight bearing ancillaries are to be formally inspected and serviced by a qualified structural engineer on an annual basis, comments regarding general condition and maintenance carried out is to be recorded and retained under unit arrangements.

#### **b. Supervisor/User Responsibilities**

(1) All fixed bolts, anchor points and karabiners must be inspected prior to use by the supervisor/user to ensure that they are secure. If in doubt, the MCT manager should be consulted and any faults reported.

### **Equipment**

21. All items of equipment used for the activity must be Service issued and approved by the Union International des Associations d'Alpinisme (UIAA). Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) must be manufactured to the design, specifications and guidelines for use under the auspices of Conformity to the European Norm (CEN). It is the responsibility of the supervisor/instructor to inspect all items of equipment for serviceability before and after use. Equipment damaged during use must be reported

and, if necessary, the supervisor/instructor is to withdraw such items from use during the activity.

### **Climbing Ropes**

22. MCT not equipped with ABD require the use of full weight climbing ropes. All ropes are to be formally inspected prior to and following use. Individual Rope Log records are to be maintained to record all usage and fall factors.

### **Climbing Helmets**

23. The wearing of helmets is compulsory on all MCT when using conventional belay methods. Where ABDs are used, only helmets with a releasable chin strap are to be worn. If these are not available then no helmet is to be worn by those climbing as there is a risk of the climber being left suspended by the neck hanging from the helmet harness.

### **Harnesses**

24. Individuals are to be checked for correct fitting of harnesses prior to climbing commencing.

### **Belaying**

25. Either an ABD or approved belay devices are to be used. Figure-of-8 descenders are not to be used as a belay device. Abseiling with novice groups is to be conducted with the use of a safety rope. Particular care must be taken when lowering personnel on ropes.

26. Particular attention must be paid to the ability of the belayer, if in doubt close supervision and or assistance must be take place. When cadets are belaying, a third person should keep hold of the dead rope to act as an additional Safety Supervisor. This person can be another suitably briefed cadet and will not count as part of the climbing ratio.

### **Clothing and Footwear**

27. Suitable clothing and footwear should be worn as approved by the qualified supervisor/instructor.

### **Jewellery**

28. Rings, bracelets, watches and jewellery on the front of the body, even under clothing, are not to be worn during climbing activities. The supervisor is responsible for advising participants on the danger from climbing with other items of jewellery. Where rings cannot be removed, as a minimum the ring should be covered and secured using zinc oxide tape; consideration should be given to precluding the individual from partaking in the activity.