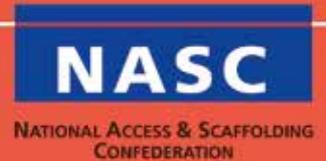


# SG35:21

## Handover of Scaffold Structures and First Scaffold Inspection



### 1. INTRODUCTION TO SCAFFOLDING INSPECTIONS

The HSE state on their website the following:

*It is the scaffold users / hirers responsibility to ensure that all scaffolding has been inspected as follows:*

- *following installation / before first use*
- *at an interval of no more than every 7 days thereafter*
- *following any circumstances liable to jeopardise the safety of the installation e.g. high winds.*

*All scaffolding inspection should be carried out by a competent person whose combination of knowledge, training and experience is appropriate for the type and complexity of the scaffold. Competence may have been assessed under the CISRS or an individual may have received training in inspecting a specific type of system scaffold from a manufacturer / supplier.*

*A non-scaffolder who has attended a scaffold inspection course (e.g. a site manager) could be deemed competent to inspect a basic scaffold structure.*

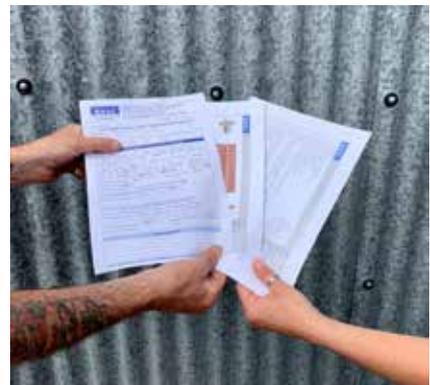
*The scaffold inspection report should note any defects or matters that could give rise to a risk to health and safety and any corrective actions taken, even when those actions are taken promptly, as this assists with the identification of any recurring problem.*

This guidance gives additional information on inspecting scaffolds, including on the issuing of handover certificates (please see section 2).

### 2. USING HANDOVERS FOR COMPLETED SCAFFOLDS

The scaffolding contractor should ensure that, at the time of handing over the scaffold to the client, the scaffolding is suitable to perform the duty for which it was intended and complies with regulations and Local Authority requirements (and has been built to the client's specification, is safe and is structurally sound). This will typically be achieved by completing a formal inspection of the scaffold and issuing a handover certificate, with copies of design drawings or TG20 Compliance Sheets (further details overleaf).

**NOTE:** The term "client" refers to the company that has requested the scaffolding contractor to erect scaffolding, which could be the principal contractor, contractor, hirer, or user.



Whilst there is no statutory requirement for a scaffold contractor to issue handover certificates, the NASC recommends that clients, for safety and traceability reasons, instruct scaffold contractors to issue them with a handover for each completed and inspected scaffold, adapted scaffold, or completed section of scaffolding.



The NASC also recommends clients sign the handover certificate confirming that they have accepted this inspected structure.

Furthermore, the information contained in the scaffolding contractor's handover certificate can fulfil the requirements of a 'First Use Inspection' as it meets the requirements of Schedule 7 of the Work at Height Regulations.

The Handover Certificate also demonstrates that the client has accepted that the scaffold is fit for purpose and has acknowledged their responsibility to ensure that mandatory inspections are performed in accordance with the Work at Height Regulations 2005 (WAHR), regulation 12 & 13 and Schedule 7, and to follow any loading limitations and any restrictions for its use etc.

If anchor ties are used, they are to be installed by a competent person (e.g. a CISRS Scaffolder), with a percentage of ties tested as detailed in **TG4 Anchorage Systems for Scaffolding**, with a report recording the results retained (please see reference section).

*NOTE:* the latest copy of **TG4 Anchorage Systems for Scaffolding** is available free to download from the NASC website.

Once the scaffold structure has been inspected and handed over to the client, it is the responsibility of the client, and not the scaffolding contractor, to ensure that mandatory inspections – e.g. 7-day inspections – are performed in accordance with the Work at Height Regulations 2005.

Handover Certificates should reference any relevant approved Design Drawings / Plot Numbers / Grid References and Elevations, as well as intended and actual loadings on scaffolds, permitted working platform loadings and any specific restrictions on its use.

Please note that while scaffold inspections and recording in the scaffold register are mandatory, the fixing of scaffold inspection tags or electronic scaffold inspection devices is not; however, the latter are very useful in informing workers that the scaffold is safe (or unsafe) to work on and are recommended by the NASC.

The NASC recommend copies of tie testing records, scaffold design drawings with calculations and / or TG20 compliance sheets, and / or system scaffolding user manual, are issued to the client and made available during erection, at handover and kept on site (e.g. in the job file).

*NOTE:* for some very complex design scaffolds, the client may require the scaffold designer to inspect and hand over the scaffold and where required this inspection requirement should be stipulated at tender / pre-design stage.

### 3. ENSURING SCAFFOLDING IS USED AND MAINTAINED IN A SAFE MANNER

It is the legal duty of the Client (e.g. Principal Contractor, Contractor, Hirer, User) to ensure that the scaffold structure is used and maintained in a safe manner, including ensuring the prevention of unauthorized modifications and overloading.

NASC Safety Guidance **SG36 Unauthorised modifications to scaffolding** gives guidance on the prevention of unauthorised modifications, including overloading (please see reference section).

#### 4. CLIENTS' DUTIES REGARDING SCAFFOLD INSPECTIONS

Once the scaffold structure has been inspected and handed over to the client, it is the responsibility of the client – *NOT the scaffold contractor* – to ensure that mandatory inspections are performed in accordance with the Work at Height Regulations 2005.

However, where required the scaffold contractor should inform the client of the client's duties as early as possible (possibly by issuing them this NASC Safety Guidance note, **SG35** and **SG39 Guidance on Appointing a Scaffolding Contractor**). The NASC recommend that the client and scaffold contractor should decide at tender stage (and prior to erection and handover) who will carry out future scaffold inspections, as some scaffolds are very complex and may be considered to be above the competence of main contractor / visiting third party inspectors.

The client should ideally stipulate in writing if they intend to carry out the scaffold inspections or if they intend to instruct the scaffold contractor to carry out inspections on their behalf.

It is also recommended that the handover certificate specifies who is responsible for carrying out scaffold inspections.

**NOTE:** The NASC recommend that the scaffold contractor's RAMS states if the client will carry out inspections or the scaffold contractor, after the scaffold is erected (please see NASC Safety Guidance **SG7 Guidance on Risk Assessment / Method Statements**).

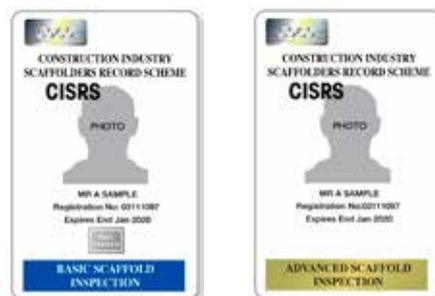
#### 5. GENERAL NOTES ON WEEKLY SCAFFOLD INSPECTIONS BY NON-SCAFFOLDERS

All scaffolding inspections should be carried out by a person whose combination of knowledge, training and experience is appropriate to the complexity of the scaffold they are inspecting.



The mandatory scaffold inspections – e.g. 7-day weekly inspections – could be done by your scaffold contractor or by a competent scaffold inspector arranged by the client. For instance, a non-scaffolder who has attended a scaffold inspection course (e.g. a site manager) could be deemed competent to inspect a basic scaffold structure.

The NASC recommend for more complex scaffolds, the client arranged inspections are undertaken by a competent person who has attended a nationally recognized scaffold inspection training course (e.g. CISRS Scaffold Inspection Training Scheme (SITS) Basic or Advanced). Please see screenshots of CISRS Scaffold Inspection and Advanced Scaffold Inspection cards:



## 6. GENERAL NOTES ON SCAFFOLD INSPECTIONS BY SCAFFOLD CONTRACTORS

The NASC recommend that scaffold inspections should be undertaken by a competent person such as a CISRS Scaffolder or CISRS Advanced Scaffolder or by someone who has attended a nationally recognized scaffold inspection training course (e.g. CISRS Scaffold Inspection Training Scheme (SITS) Basic or Advanced). The scaffold inspections could be done by your scaffolding contractor or by another competent scaffold inspector.

CISRS Scaffolders or CISRS Advanced Scaffolders are competent to inspect structures up to the grade of the card, e.g. CISRS Scaffolders can inspect basic structures and CISRS Advanced Scaffolders can inspect all structures.



## 7. ADDITIONAL INSPECTION INFORMATION

For long standing scaffolds (e.g. over 2 years), please consult NASC Safety Guidance **SG41 Long Standing Scaffold Structures**.

For further information about CISRS Cards and Inspections, please consult **SG39 Appointing a Scaffolding Contractor** and the latest NASC Scaffold Specification, which is available on the NASC website (please see reference section).

## 8. SCAFFOLDING INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS DURING DISMANTLING STAGE

Wherever possible, scaffolds that are no longer required for access purposes should be dismantled as soon as possible.

In most cases scaffolds that are still erected seven days or more after the previous inspection, will require additional inspections as per the WAHR requirements (e.g. 7-day inspections).

A risk-based approach to an extension of the timescales of off hired / decommissioned scaffolds, may be able to be adopted in some cases where scaffolds are not likely to be exposed to environmental effects (wind / snow etc), cannot be accessed by other trades or members of the public and it is not foreseeable that any vehicles or plant could strike the scaffold.

Before dismantling a scaffold structure, which has previously been handed over to the user (e.g. client), the structure should be thoroughly inspected to identify any defect likely to cause a potential safety risk to those undertaking the dismantling (this includes dirt or debris left on a scaffold).

Any defects must be rectified by those responsible before dismantling commences. Recording of all defects / damage to scaffolding caused by third parties should be communicated onto the client for their records and for action. The NASC recommend that the client uses these examples for future site inductions and toolbox talks to other trades working onsite, to improve safety and to reduce unauthorised modifications to scaffolding. Dated photos would be helpful for future discussion that arise from the above mentioned.

Where this involves re-erecting scaffolding (e.g. re-erecting anchor ties or replacing missing scaffold components), the client should issue a site variation to the scaffold contractor to complete the safety works prior to dismantle.

## 9. REFERENCES AND FURTHER GUIDANCE

### Legislation

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Work at Height Regulations 2005.

NASC Safety Guidance, including the following:

- SG7 – Guidance on Risk Assessment/Method Statements.
- SG32 – Provision of extended and telescopic transoms and board brackets.
- SG36 – Unauthorised modifications to scaffolding.
- SG39 – Guidance on appointing a Scaffolding Contractor / Scaffold Specification.
- SG41 – Long standing scaffolding structures.

NASC Technical Guidance, including the following:

- TG4 – Anchorage systems.
- TG20 – Operation Guide / Design Guide.
- TG16 – Anchoring to the Ground.

*NOTE:* NASC guidance is updated generally every five years so please consult website for latest version.

All NASC Guidance is free to download, with only the booklets and the TG20 Suite (Operations and Design books and TG20 software available for purchase).

### HSE Guidance

HSE Website useful links:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/>.

Construction – Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015 ([hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)).

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/scaffoldinginfo.htm>.

### Standards

BS 5975 Code of Practice for Temporary Works.

## CISRS and NASC Guidance

Construction Industry Scaffolders Record Scheme (CISRS), for queries please email [enquiries@cisrs.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cisrs.org.uk) or ring 0844 815 7223.

CISRS website: <http://cisrs.org.uk/> which has been the industry recognised training scheme for scaffolders for forty years.

CISRS website details full training details, example link: <http://cisrs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/cap609-general-information-booklet.pdf>.

National Access and Scaffolding Confederation (NASC), for queries please email [enquiries@nasc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@nasc.org.uk) or ring (+44) 20 7822 7400.

NASC Website: where the Scaffold Specification can be downloaded free of charge: <https://www.nasc.org.uk/shop/free-publications/scaffold-specification-template/>.

Please also check the NASC website for information and teaching aids such as the following: <https://www.nasc.org.uk/information/free-video-guidance/>.

NASC Website: <https://www.nasc.org.uk/> where scaffolding guidance for Safety, Technical, Contractual, Security and Procurement Guidance is also free to download.



*Whilst every effort has been made to provide reliable and accurate information, we would welcome any corrections to information provided by the author which may not be entirely accurate, therefore and for this reason, the NASC or indeed the author, cannot accept responsibility for any misinformation posted.*



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