

Working Platform Certificate (FPS/WPC/4e)

Project name	
Work area covered by this certificate	

(A sketch or marked up pile layout drawing shall be attached to this certificate. Include haul roads and gridlines.)

Part 1 – WORKING PLATFORM DESIGN (INCLUDING RAMPS AND ACCESS)

Equipment to be used on site.		Track width (m)	
Mode	Case 1	Case 2	
Characteristic track pressure (kPa)			
Equivalent track bearing length (m)			

(Note: BR470 'Working Platforms for Tracked Plant: Good practice guide to the design, installation, maintenance and repair of ground-supported platforms' is available from BRE Group – <https://bregroup.com>)

Designer name		Tel No.	
Designer organisation		Design reference	
Subgrade strength (Cu or ϕ)		Groundwater depth (m bgl)	
Platform material density (kN/m ³)		Platform angle of friction ϕ (°)	Platform design thickness (mm)
Geotextile/Geogrid (layers and strength)		Geotextile/Geogrid depth (m below WPL)	
Testing required to verify the design			

Part 2 – VERIFICATION BY PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR

The working platform detailed above has been designed, installed to the design, and as specified, tested to safely support the equipment detailed in Part 1 above. The limits of the platform have been clearly identified on site as necessary.

The working platform will be REGULARLY INSPECTED, MAINTAINED, MODIFIED, REPAIRED, and REINSTATED to the as-designed condition after any excavation or damage, throughout the period when the equipment is on site. A completed copy of this certificate signed by an authorised person from the Principal Contractor shall be given to each user of the working platform prior to commencement of any works.

Name & Position		Date
Organisation		Signature

The HSE has worked closely with the FPS to develop this initiative and supports the principle of reducing accidents by the certification of properly designed, installed and maintained working platforms.

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Working Platform Regular Inspection Log

The working platform is to be inspected at weekly intervals and after any event that might change the nature of the working platform (such as heavy rain or flooding). Any modification or repair to the working platform is in accordance with the platform design. If necessary, a revised Working Platform Layout Drawing has been issued to the specialist contractor.

Date	Organisation	Name & Position	Signature	Comments (include key details of alteration, modification, maintenance, repair, date of next inspection, and any testing)

Guidance on Working Platforms for Tracked Plant

Roles and responsibilities:

- Designer -** A competent individual responsible for the design and specification of the working platform for the specified plant.
- Authorised Person -** A competent individual responsible for ensuring that the working platform is installed and tested in accordance with the design document and drawings. This individual should be authorised to act on behalf of the Principal Contractor.

1. Design

- 1.1. The HSWA 1974 and CDM Regulations 2015 require the Principal Contractor to appoint competent Designers in respect of working platform design. This legislation explains how competence can be assessed by reference to professional qualifications or professional memberships and by reference to practical experience of the design of working platforms. Principal Contractors must be satisfied that a competent Designer has been appointed by them in accordance with the relevant legislation before they complete and sign the WPC.
- 1.2. The FPS Working Platform Certificate is mandatory for all sites where a rig or attendant plant operates. It must be signed by an Authorised Person from the Principal Contractor. This signature confirms that the legal duties required under CDM have been carried out.
- 1.3. Whilst the same type of rig may be operated by different companies, the design bearing pressures may differ due to the specific operating configuration of the rig and/or any modifications. Details of the plant to be used and bearing pressures will be provided by the specialist contractor in advance of work commencing. Loading in accordance with the BR470 design approach can be determined using the FPS Rig Bearing Pressure Calculation tool.
- 1.4. Working platform design and performance is extremely sensitive to the bearing pressure and type of fill used in the platform. For example, changing the angle of friction of the fill from 35° to 45° can halve the platform thickness. It is therefore advised that the Designer may have to adopt conservative estimates of platform shear strength unless higher values can be demonstrated by testing or by reference to appropriate published data. In accordance with BR470 the working platform fill should contain < 15% fines.
- 1.5. It must be ensured that adequate drainage is installed to prevent the build-up of water within or on the surface of the platform. The drainage requirements should be designed, taking account of the planned works (including groundwater and slurry arisings) and the time of year in which the works are being carried out. The platform designer should be aware of any planned drainage installation. Drainage normally includes a slope on the subgrade, to prevent pooling or soft spots at the base of the platform. In addition, drainage runs, and water extraction may be required, depending on the site conditions and type of work being carried out.
- 1.6. Proof testing of the platform should be carried out by an appropriate method such as those detailed within TWF¹ or EFFC/DFI² guidance. Such testing, as part of an appropriately designed testing regime, should highlight any gross inconsistencies in platform performance. Potentially, significant savings in platform thickness and cost may be realised by adopting a more detailed testing strategy.
- 1.7. The working platform must have a design life which starts before delivery of the specialist equipment and, as a minimum, extends to completion of all geotechnical works. This includes load testing, integrity testing, investigation of non-conformances and any remedial works. Consideration should be given to ensuring that the working platform remains serviceable for follow-on activities, noting that these would not necessarily be covered by this certification.
- 1.8. Working platforms must maintain safety and efficiency throughout their design life while also being economically viable; both in terms of cost-effectiveness and sustainability. To achieve this, it is crucial to avoid over-designing platforms, ensuring a thorough evaluation of equipment loading, soil parameters, and appropriate testing regimes. The design and construction of temporary working platforms should incorporate all three pillars of sustainability: economic, environmental, and social. Whilst financial considerations often take precedence, the advantages of reducing carbon emissions, social welfare, and improving health and safety standards should not be overlooked. Further information in this respect can be found within the EFFC/DFI² guidance document.

2. Installation

- 2.1. If the working platform is to be constructed or removed in phases whilst geotechnical works are ongoing, then the extent of the platform must be clearly defined on the certificate and physically demarked on site. This is particularly important where the platform material is removed from an area previously made available to the specialist contractor.
- 2.2. The working platform will provide access for all plant deliveries, sub-contractors and personnel associated with the specialist operations. The working platform must be safe for pedestrian access and free from trip hazards (protruding reinforcement is a common hazard). It must not contain harmful materials and contaminants, particularly those that can become airborne in dusty conditions. Properly designed and installed, the working platform could also provide suitable and safe access for following trades for the whole project.
- 2.3. It is good practice that the working platform, including all accesses and ramps, should extend at least 2m beyond the pile position/edge of the building/outside edge of the rig tracks, subject to the design minimums, to ensure sufficient safe working area for the specialist's personnel and attendant plant. Note that when using a BR470 platform design, the edge distance should be a minimum of at least half the machine width. Where there is a requirement to work less than 2m (or half the rig width, as applicable) from the platform edge, it must be ensured that the Designer has considered this and the subsequent installation requirements within their design.

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- 2.4. Where access ramps are used to move between working levels these must be of sufficient gradient (typically 1:10) and width to allow the plant to move safely within the stability constraints of the machine. All ramps must be specifically considered by design before installation. Ramps must be in a straight line between working areas. Rigs and cranes cannot change direction on ramps. Where a change in direction is required, this must be on a flat level platform.
- 2.5. Poor definition of the edge of the working platform, including ramps, is a major cause of tracked plant instability. The permissible working extents of the platform (minimum distance of plant to platform edge) for working platforms, access areas and ramps, should be adequately identified/demarcated. The method of demarcation should be suitable for the level of risk and consider the practicalities of normal rig operation. In high-risk areas, physical barriers such as timber sleepers or roadblocks are recommended.
- 2.6. Construction records should be kept relating to the installation of the platform, including (but not limited to):- details of the site preparation, provision of drainage, weather and sub-grade conditions, method and details of compaction plant, testing etc.

3. Maintenance, modification, repair and reinstatement

- 3.1. The working platform must be kept free draining. Water and slurry which is allowed to build up on the working platform can hide such hazards as recently constructed piles, trip hazards, uneven or unstable ground, services and excavations. Slurry can be transferred to work equipment which increases the risk of slips on steps as well as difficult handling of work tools. In addition, saturation of the platform can lead to rapid deterioration of the platform. In the case of fine-grained sub-grades, a separation/filter membrane should be provided beneath the platform material to inhibit 'pumping' and infiltration of the fine-grained soils up into the platform material during wet weather (which can impair platform performance and increase maintenance costs).
- 3.2. Obstructions encountered during installation of the geotechnical works will generally require excavation to remove them. This can create a 'soft spot' which can result in the rig overturning. It is essential, therefore, that any excavations made in the working platform are reinstated to the design, including any reinforcement and separation filter/membrane. This is not always practicable, such as for large diameter bored piles with a concrete finish level below platform level, and in these cases the platform designer must be made aware and consider this within their design. A separate guidance document on excavation and reinstatement is provided specifically covering pile related instances.
- 3.3. The working platform shall be subject to regular inspection by a competent individual appointed by the Principal Contractor (e.g. the Temporary Works Co-ordinator) throughout its design life and after any reinstatement or any works which might have modified it. Any damaged or inadequate areas identified must be reinstated to the designed standard. Following the regular inspection, the Working Platform Regular Inspection Log shall be signed by an authorised representative of the Principal Contractor and issued to the specialist contractor with a layout drawing of the working platform amended as appropriate.
- 3.4. Where there is an intention to reuse platform material (whether for repair, reinstatement, or new platform installation) it must be ensured that on each occasion of reuse this still complies with the design requirements and the material should be re-tested to ensure this. Failure to do so can lead to the rapid deterioration of the working platform. It must be ensured that any testing is reflective of the typical material planned for reuse and meets the requirements of the material testing as defined within the design. Further guidance is provided on this within the TWF guidance¹.
- 3.5. The design platform minimum thickness must be maintained. Depending on the technique being carried out there may be a requirement for the removal of spoil arisings and scraping of the platform surface. In this case consideration needs to be given by the designer and party responsible for maintenance as to how the platform thickness is to be maintained, which may include regular surveying or a sacrificial wearing layer. Further guidance is available in the TWF guidance¹.
- 3.6. The specialist contractor is to advise the Principal Contractor at the earliest practicable opportunity should the specialist contractor become aware of any circumstances relating to the working platform that renders it unsafe.

4. Working Platform Layout

- 4.1 Items that must be included and properly located on the working platform layout drawing and be notified by the Principal Contractor to the specialist contractor would include: detail of platform edges and minimum 2m delineation, trial pits, services or voids, areas of backfilling, known underground basements; areas that are covered by the certificate or permit, test locations (if specified by the Designer of the platform) and any other feature that may affect the safety of operations.

References

1. TWF document '*Design and Construction of Granular Working Platforms*' TWf2024:03 (November 2024).
2. EFFF/DFI '*Guide to Working Platforms*' Edition 2 (May 2025).