

access

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FEATURES:

Van mounts

Vertical masts

INTERVIEWS:

Ahern Rentals

Snorkel

Paris platform



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ACCESS INTERNATIONAL: 30 YEARS AS THE INDUSTRY'S LEADING GLOBAL MAGAZINE

Reducing the risk

Dave Randles, **safety director and principle consultant at International work at height consultancy Simian Risk, writes about how new guidance on tube and fitting scaffolding from the UK's National Access & Scaffolding Confederation (NASC) will affect the industry.**



Dave Randles, Simian Risk's safety director and principle consultant

Towards the end of last year, Simian Risk held a work at height safety conference at its headquarters in the North West of England, which featured presentations on various current issues affecting the industry.

The overwhelming feedback from more than 150 delegates was that they were most interested in the presentation we gave on the forthcoming National Access & Scaffolding Confederation (NASC) TG20:13 guidance.

TG20:13, as many in our industry will know, is the latest update in guidance on tube and fitting scaffolding from the National Access and Scaffolding Confederation. The document serves to provide guidance on the application of European standard BS EN 12811-1 and is the update of the previous version, TG20:08. The TG Scaffolding Guidance

is revised every five years, and so now we wait for the launch of TG20:13, which we believe will have a big impact on scaffolding design across the UK, and also on an international level.

It is expected that the full content of the document will be revealed in Spring 2013; and until then, we cannot say for sure what will be included in the document.

User friendly

However, as an insight into the guidance, we believe that TG20:13 will adopt a more user-friendly approach than its predecessor and will be more pictorial than previous versions; a common complaint about the last revision was that it was difficult to follow. All standard scaffolds detailed in TG20:13 will be fully designed and proven by calculation, as such no further design work will be necessary.

TG20:13 will be available electronically and to download as an App for mobile devices, and will include more scaffold types as standard designs. The guide will also demonstrate through a computer software system if a scaffolding system needs further design or not.

Essentially, this means that there will be a lot more scaffolding that can be erected without additional design input.

It is believed that while TG20:08 particularly benefitted designers, the revised guidance will bring scaffolding back into the hands of the scaffolders, rather than the engineers, and will remove some of the burden for design currently experienced.

Among the scaffolding designs which we expect to be included are: (see above)

- Basic birdcages
- Towers
- Basic fans
- Loading bays
- Unit transoms
- 3 m lift heights
- Hop-up brackets
- Basic bridges
- Basic splays

Global impact

The document will offer more support for scaffolders, with detailed testing, calculations and advice on best practice to ensure that any scaffolding erected complies with the European standard BS EN 12811-1.

Although TG20:13 is guidance, rather than legislation and therefore not directly enforceable by law, it will provide scaffolding contractors the means to discharge their duties under Schedule 3, Part 2 of the Work at Height Regulations.

As TG20:13 provides best practice guidance for BS EN 12811-1, the significance will not be felt quite so much on an international scale due to the overseas preference for system scaffolding. However, we believe that it will still have a large impact on scaffolding operations across the globe.

The UK remains the world leader when it comes to tube and fitting scaffolding, and the expat community working internationally in the construction sector will likely adopt the latest revision of TG20:13 in much the same way as they did with previous revisions. Indeed, Simian's extensive involvement in works in areas such as the Middle East and Asia for UK-based multi-nationals invariably sees an insistence by them on adherence



TG20:13 is likely to have a positive impact on scaffolding operations across the globe. Here Simian Risk carries out work in the Middle East

to the highest standards available.

During our recent work-at-height safety conference we hosted delegates from a range of companies, including blue chip clients such as Carillion, Shell, BIS and Layher. These companies all operate on an international scale with construction, oil and gas and infrastructure projects, and the message was most definitely that UK guidance will be used in the short and long term.

Ultimately, we believe that TG20:13 will go a long way towards strengthening the UK's position as world leaders in the provision of safe access.

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Simian Risk carries out training at one of its facilities in the UK