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| Title: | Tower Scaffold Component Compatibility | | |
| Priority | | Amber – Audit Rating: Non-Conformance-Minor | |
| Legislation: | PUWER, WAHR, HASWA Section 6 | | |
| Brief Description: | Many components of tower scaffold from different manufacturers may fit one another however they may not be deemed compatible by their manufacturers. This bulletin provides guidance on the compatibility of tower components from different manufacturers. | | |
| Equipment Affected: | All Scaffold Tower and components | | |

During SafeHire audits it has been identified that some hire companies carry a mixture of tower scaffold components from different manufacturers.

PASMA - the Prefabricated Access Suppliers' and Manufacturers' Association, provides the following guidance on the compatibility of tower components from different manufacturers:

“Normally, tower components are not compatible with components from different manufacturers, even if they are the same dimensions. In other words, you can’t just take a platform or brace, or any other component, from one make of tower and use it on a different tower made by another manufacturer. Sometimes even components from different models of tower made by the same manufacturer are also not compatible.

To determine if a tower from one manufacturer might be compatible with another make of tower, PASMA issued a Compatibility Protocol which was last revised in November 2023. The Compatibility Protocol lays out the principles that need to be followed by manufacturers to determine the potential for compatibility.

Amongst other things, the protocol requires that any claims of compatibility are verified by an independent third party approved body. The manufacturer and the independent third party approved body will determine what checks and tests it needs to carry to demonstrate conformance with the PASMA Compatibility Protocol.

Only use components from different towers where that third party verification has been carried out and the manufacturer claiming compatibility can provide you with evidence of that fact.

A further requirement of the PASMA Protocol is that manufacturers claiming compatibility with other makes of tower, must issue user instructions which cover the mixing of the components from the different towers. It is vital that before mixing and matching components, you read those instructions carefully as it will highlight any operational differences between the two towers.

When a PASMA member claims compatibility with other towers and with the Protocol, the relevant instruction manuals will be marked ‘claims compatibility with another manufacturer’ in the PASMA instruction manual library”.

Whilst it is a commercial decision for any organisation choosing to buy, sell, and/or hire other manufacturers compatible components for use with the original manufacturer’s components, it is essential to consider the following points:

1. That any claims of compatibility are verified by an independent third party to all parts of EN1004/1 with the certification issued by a UKAS (United Kingdom Accreditation Service) or EA (European Co-operation on Accreditation) Accredited Body, which is also in keeping with the PASMA Technical Committee Compatibility Protocol.




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- Observe the original manufacturers assembly instructions to determine whether it is stipulated that *'Only original (manufacturers name) products and/or components, in undamaged condition as specified in this instruction manual, shall be used to assemble this access tower'.*

Note: Tower scaffold should have a legible manufacturers label/decals as per BS EN 1004-1:2020. The manufacturers label must be visible from ground level showing: manufacturer's name, designation, and "Read the instruction manual"

The instructions can be shown as a symbol in accordance with ISO7010:2019 or text written in the official language of the country where the product is placed on the market'



| Mixture of Frames + Frame Decal Illegible | PASMA Tower Inspection Guidance Poster | Mixture of Frames + Spigot Caps Missing |
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| HAE EHA Recommended Actions: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Towers in hire fleets should be segregated by manufacturer and not sent out as a mix of components unless a claim of compatibility has been certified in accordance with the requirements of the PASMA Compatibility Protocol (November 2023) by an independent third party approved body. Instruction manuals for towers with mixed components must also be certified in accordance with the requirements of the PASMA Compatibility Protocol (November 2023) by an independent third party approved body i.e. UKAS (United Kingdom Accreditation Service) or EA (European Co-operation on Accreditation). Consult your tower scaffold supplier. Many suppliers offer 'trade-in' service where your old components from other suppliers can be traded in towards the replacement cost. Train hire teams regarding component compatibility and inspection. Use PASMA Inspection Poster or manufacturer supplied poster as additional guidance for hire team as part of the pre-hire inspection checks. | |
| Circulation: | Workshops, Mobile Service, Hire Counter Technicians, and Management Team. | |

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