

Instructions on the use of STA *StackTAG* system

The image shows a white plastic holder with a yellow insert. The insert is a form titled 'OmniTag® StackTAG Permanent Platform Inspection Record'. It features two tables for recording data. The first table has three columns: 'Survey Type', 'Date', and 'Signature'. The second table has three columns: 'Date', 'Inspection Carried out by', and 'Signature'. The form also includes the STA logo and contact information at the bottom.

Survey Type	Date	Signature
Baseline Survey		
Periodic Survey		
Next Periodic Survey Due		

Date	Inspection Carried out by	Signature

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The STA **StackTAG** is designed for use with permanent platforms and is similar to the Scafftag system for scaffolding.

The system comprises a holder, which is to be attached at the base of the platform, and a plastic insert which gives details of previous surveys and inspections.

Using the **StackTAG** system

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 stipulates that new and existing platforms must be subjected to a **baseline survey**. Platforms should then be subjected to **periodic** surveys and further inspections **prior-to-use**. Information concerning these surveys and inspections should be contained on the **StackTAG** as described below.

The **StackTAG** has been carefully designed to ensure that persons using a platform can clearly identify its survey/inspection history. Inserts should **not** be cleaned and reused - entries should be made using a permanent marker pen. The **StackTAG** inserts can then be used to complement the written inspection records.

STA *StackTAG* - instruction for use

Baseline survey.

For new platforms, the baseline survey is to be carried out after installation but before use. This is, in effect, a commissioning survey. In the case of an existing platform, a baseline survey should be carried out at the earliest opportunity by a suitably competent person (e.g. a Structural Engineer). He or she will report on the platform's current condition and whether it meets the appropriate specification (refer to STA guidance note WAH 001 for more information). The baseline survey should also state what acceptance criteria should be used for checking that the basic specification continues to be met during future surveys/inspections.

Periodic Surveys.

These are to be carried out at prescribed intervals. The frequency of periodic surveys should be risk-based, taking into account the current condition of the platform, deterioration risk-factors and other issues. The frequency of inspection shall be determined by a competent person (e.g. a Structural Engineer). Further guidance is given in STA guidance note WAH 001.

Next periodic survey due.

This is the date when the next periodic survey is due to be undertaken.

Prior-to-use inspections.

These are to be carried out **within SEVEN days prior to use** (if the platform is one from which a person could fall more than two metres).

This inspection has to be carried out by a competent person; however, this could be a member of a site's own staff who has received suitable and sufficient training from a Structural Engineer on the scope and conduct of prior-to-use inspections. Details of this training shall be formally documented.

STA StackTAG - instruction for use

Definition of a competent person

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 state that *“Every employer shall ensure that no person engages in any activity, including organisation, planning and supervision, in relation to work at height or work equipment unless he is competent to do so or, if being trained, is being supervised by a competent person”*.

The HSE has provided the STA with a basic definition of a competent person.

“A competent person is a person who can demonstrate that they have sufficient professional or technical training, knowledge, actual experience, and authority to enable them to:

- *Carry out their assigned duties at the level of responsibility allocated to them;*
- *Understand any potential hazards related to the work (or equipment) under consideration;*
- *Detect any technical defects or omissions in that work (or equipment), recognise any implications for health and safety caused by those defects, and be able to specify a remedial action to mitigate those implications”*.

This is the core definition and is never altered. However, it may then be expanded to cover what is required for a particular application. For inspection of a permanent elevated working platform, the HSE has suggested adding the following. A competent person shall have:

- *Sufficient knowledge of the mechanical and physical properties of the materials and assemblies involved;*
- *Practical experience of installation of the platform, its usage, behaviour and failure modes in service;*
- *An understanding of the structural engineering issues involved and structural test methods and checks;*
- *Adequate training in the use of any safety equipment required for, and to deal with, the hazards associated with the inspection;*
- *An understanding of the need for and the ability to check the adequacy of the safety equipment allocated to them; and*
- *An ability to state the correct procedure for the task and the emergency procedures in place for the work.*

In practice, there may be more than one competent person, each specialising in one or more of these steps. For instance, the HSE has advised the STA that for stacks/platforms that have not been built to a

STA *StackTAG* - instruction for use

recognised design standard (there is not one!), or that have not had a previous assessment of strength and stability (e.g. under the Construction Design and Management Regulations 1994), the operator will need to have the stack/platform surveyed by a competent structural engineer to establish the current integrity and condition. This baseline assessment would then recommend the extent and frequency of subsequent periodic inspections. The assessment would include, but not be limited to, the effects of stress, fatigue, weathering, corrosion and damage. The periodic inspections might then be carried out by a different competent person, for example an engineer surveyor.

To order additional holders or inserts contact:

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