

## Discrepancies in Rope Assessments

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## **Major Discrepancies (F)**

Major Discrepancies are awarded for any single event that may lead to loss of life, injury, gear failure, or damage.

Awarding a single Major (F) will result in the termination of the assessment.

Major Discrepancies are grouped into these areas:

- F1 Less than two independent points of attachment if this is the agreed protocol.
- F2 Excessive time taken over entire assessment.
- F3 Task not completed.
- F4 Harness un-secured, cows-tails/lanyards tied or attached incorrectly.
- F5 No helmet in hot zone.
- F6 Equipment used in an unsafe manner.
- F7 Descender threaded or attached incorrectly AND loaded.
- F8 No or inappropriate safety equipment used on an unprotected edge.
- F9 Swinging/uncontrolled moves that may cause injury or damage equipment.
- F10 Poor technique or incorrect use of equipment that may be unsafe.
- F11 Fraud, cheating or coaching.

## **Minor Discrepancies (D)**

Minor discrepancies are any action or event that may lead to an unsafe condition to develop.

Being awarded three (3) Minors (D) will result in termination of the assessment.

Minor discrepancies are grouped into these main areas:

- D1 Attachment connection not secure.
- D2 Equipment dropped or left behind.
- D3 No rope protection or incorrectly placed when required.
- D4 Helmet: No helmet in warm zone or chinstrap unfastened in hot zone.
- D5 Tangles in rope.
- D6 Poor or incorrect use of equipment.
- D7 Excessive time taken in individual task.
- D8 Swinging, uncontrolled movement.
- D9 Allowing slack rope to develop between devices and the load or anchor.
- D10 Poor technique that allows an unsafe condition to develop.

The following points may help to understand the list of Discrepancies.

### **Major Discrepancies**

- F1 Less than two independent points of attachment during suspended works if this is the agreed protocol.** At all times during suspension, the candidate/victim needs to be attached to two separate ropes/rope systems. If this is not possible because of the technique being performed, then appropriate risk assessment must be performed and potential hazards must be mitigated.
- F2 Excessive time taken over entire assessment.** Excessive time may be indicative of either poor technique or lack of fitness for the required tasks. The time allowed for assessment shall be determined by the assessor.
- F3 Task not completed.** Candidates need to ensure they receive training to address all aspects of the assessment. If a candidate has a task set for their level and this is not completed, through either the candidate giving up or being stopped by the assessor, a major will be awarded.
- F4 Harness un-secured, cows-tails/lanyards tied or attached incorrectly.** Any load bearing connection to the harness shall be connected in a secure manner. This will also include any tied direct connection.
- F5 No helmet in hot zone.** An appropriate helmet must be worn anytime the candidate is exposed to a hazard – this may be from objects falling from above or when there is any fall potential.
- F6 Equipment used incorrectly.** Equipment needs to be used in a manner that does not defeat the function of the device. Potential loads applied must not exceed the rating of the device used,
- F7 Descender threaded or attached incorrectly AND loaded.** Loading a descender on a rope incorrectly and then loading it with the intention of use shall be viewed as device that can't be operated correctly. This device can't be counted as a point of attachment to the rope.
- F8 No or inappropriate safety equipment used on an unprotected edge.** Candidates must have a full understanding and awareness fall hazards. This may include:
- Fall arrest systems.
  - Different types of fall protection.
  - How to protect yourself when going from fall-arrest to rope-suspension or vice versa.
- F9 Swinging or uncontrolled moves that may cause injury or damage equipment.**  
Swinging or uncontrolled movement that may cause injury to yourself or others or damage to equipment must not occur. Typical areas of concern are:

- Edge mobility.
- Deviations.
- Cross hauls.
- Rope-to-rope transfers.
- Highlines.
- Tensioned lines and Skate Blocks.
- Swing falls of more than 600mm (loss of height).

**F10 Poor technique or incorrect use of equipment that may be unsafe.** At no stage should the candidate place anyone at risk of injury through poor technique or poor use of equipment.

Some examples may include:

- Attaching to non-rated points on a harness.
- Allowing a fall potential to develop during a rescue.
- Incorrect use of equipment that may result in failure of the device.
- Potential to fall onto toothed cam ascenders.
- Not backing up a loaded line.
- Allowing a loop to develop in safety/backup lines.
- Failure to protect a swing fall.

**F11 Fraud, cheating or coaching.** Fraud, cheating, or coaching will not be tolerated during the assessment. A major discrepancy will be awarded for any cheating or coaching.

### **Minor Discrepancies**

- D1 Attachment connection not secure.** All connections for load bearing use shall be connected in a secure manner. If a connector is placed in the system with the intention of use, then it must be locked. It may be left unlocked to facilitate immediate attachment of further elements.
- D2 Equipment dropped or left behind.** Critical equipment dropped or left behind increases risk to others, shows poor planning, and the possible lack of equipment to complete the task.
- D3 No rope protection or incorrectly placed when required.** Placing rope protection enhances the safety of the rope access system and may protect the facility/environment from rope marks and damage.
- D4 Helmet: No helmet in warm zone or chinstrap unfastened in hot zone.** No helmet when exposed to falling objects or to a potential fall. Chinstrap not fastened when suspended on a rope or in a position where a falling helmet presents a hazard to others.
- D5 Tangles in rope.** Descending or lowering with a running rope moving through a fixed rope (cows-tails, lanyards, harness, ...) that may cut or cause damage. This may also lead to

confusion and entanglement.

**D6 Poor or incorrect use of equipment.** Poor or incorrect use of equipment contrary to the manufacturers' instructions. This may include:

- Lack of extra required friction when lowering/descending.
- Misuse of equipment that may cause damage.
- Not locking off descender/lowering device when not in use.
- Cross loading carabiners.
- Incorrect selection of gear for task.

**D7 Excessive time taken in individual task.** Excessive time taken during an individual task may be indicative of either poor technique or unfamiliarity with the activity. The time allowed for each task shall be at the discretion of the assessor.

**D8 Swinging, uncontrolled movement.** Small unintended swings or uncontrolled movement demonstrates poor technique and is to be avoided. It may cause injury or damage to equipment. Typical areas of concern are:

- Cross hauls.
- Deviations.
- Negation of an edge.
- Highlines.
- Tensioned lines and Skate Blocks.
- Swing falls of less than 600mm (loss of height).

**D9 Allowing slack rope to develop between devices and the load or anchor.** Techniques that allow slack rope to develop between devices and the load or anchor should be avoided. Large forces may result and place excessive loads on elements of a rope system.

**D10 Poor technique that allows an unsafe condition to develop.** Poor technique that allows an unsafe condition to develop. Some examples are:

- Incorrect knot selection.
- Incorrect knot tying.
- No return knot for diversions.
- Poor sling angles in anchor systems.
- Failure to protect swing fall of less than 600mm.