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Portable roof ladders - Specification

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Foreword

Publishing information

This British Standard is published by BSI Standards Limited, under licence from The British Standards Institution, and came into effect on 31 October 2017. It was prepared by Technical Committee B/512, *Ladders*. A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its secretary.

Use of this document

It has been assumed in the preparation of this British Standard that the execution of its provisions will be entrusted to appropriately qualified and experienced people, for whose use it has been produced.

Presentational conventions

The provisions of this standard are presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Requirements are expressed in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is “shall”.

Commentary, explanation and general informative material is presented in smaller italic type, and does not constitute a normative element.

Where words have alternative spellings, the preferred spelling of The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary is used (e.g. “organization” rather than “organisation”).

Contractual and legal considerations

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

Introduction

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 [1] gives specific requirements regarding the use of ladders which apply equally to roof ladders.

Roof ladders are suspended ladders retained at their top by a hook (ridge hook) which rests against the opposite side of a pitched roof. Bearers underneath the climbing face of the ladder serve both to support the ladder and to ensure there is sufficient distance between the ladder and the roof for the user's hands and feet enabling a firm hand and foot hold. This British Standard specifies the minimum distances required for that purpose.

The HSE has received reports that roof ladders might become unstable when subjected to forces which can be generated by the actions of the user working on roof ladders. Hence this standard specifies dimensions for the minimum width of the ridge hook and bearers to reduce the possibility of the ladder becoming unstable. Work is being carried out by the HSL (Health & Safety Laboratories) which might, in future revisions of this standard, enable a test for stability of roof ladders or provide further verification of the current dimensional requirements.

The scope of this British Standard encompasses roof ladders for use on certain angles of dual pitched roofs. A range of 25° to 65° encompasses the majority of pitched roofs that are likely to be encountered by users of this type of ladder. Other types of access equipment can be considered for roof pitches outside of this range.

This British Standard does not consider the use of personal protection equipment intended as a means of fall arrest, which is connected to a roof ladder and the potential loads that would be generated on the ladder in a fall arrest situation as a result of the attachment of such equipment. Designers of proprietary PPE systems connected to a roof ladder are advised to consider this fact and design the PPE, and its connections with the ladder, accordingly. Annex A is intended to assist with this.

1 Scope

This British Standard specifies requirements for portable roof ladders specifically designed solely to provide temporary access to pitched roofs with angles between 25° and 65° for tasks that are of short duration and low risk.

In particular, it specifies:

- a) general design features, requirements and test methods;
- b) the supporting elements, the bearers and ridge hook, and their connections to the ladders, including how a ladder is supported and located by the ridge of a pitched roof;
- c) the pitch, dimensions and form of a roof ladder's climbing surfaces, according to the intended angles of use;
- d) the wheels used to manoeuvre a roof ladder into position on a pitched roof; and
- e) markings and user instructions.

Roof ladders conforming to this standard are only intended for use on pitched roofs with angles between 25° and 65° and for no other purpose. They are not intended for use as leaning or standing ladders.

This British Standard covers single section roof ladders, extending roof ladders, roof ladders with hinge (articulated) joints, roof ladders with telescopic joints and multi-part (sectional) roof ladders.