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**REASONS TO
USE AN IRATA
MEMBER
COMPANY**

IRATA INTERNATIONAL

IRATA International is the leading worldwide authority on industrial rope access, and its methods have set the global standard for safe working at height since the association's inception over 30 years ago. Since then, it has been at the forefront of the development and application of efficient, safe, eco-friendly solutions to the work-at-height sector. Today, IRATA has a vast array of member companies operating globally and widely represented across industry sectors such as oil and gas, construction, renewable energy, geotechnical, and the built environment.

The IRATA technician certification scheme is widely recognised as the industry standard for rope access personnel, boasting over 100,000 qualified active technicians worldwide. IRATA is accredited to ISO 17024 by UKAS, the United Kingdom's national accreditation body, providing assurance that its certification services are recognised as international best practice.





1 MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

All IRATA member companies submit themselves to independent audit as a means of gaining and maintaining membership. These comprehensive standards are set in the IRATA Membership Requirements. Companies must meet all aspects set out within the document and agree to abide by these and other IRATA governing principles.

Prior to gaining IRATA membership, as a minimum, applicant companies must:

- Be a legally incorporated entity and have appropriate insurance;
- have an appointed qualified and competent Technical Authority;
- have sufficient and approved equipment and equipment management systems;
- have documented procedures specific to their intended fields of activity.

Companies wishing to gain membership undergo initial audits as part of their entry process. New members will be audited again one year after their entry to ensure they are applying the approved processes in the workplace. Throughout their IRATA membership, members undergo regular cyclical audits.

2

THE IRATA MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

The IRATA Membership Requirements provides the standards that applicants and current members must comply with to become and maintain their status as an IRATA Operator and/or Trainer member company.

The IRATA Membership Requirements set out a framework for companies to define, demonstrate, and develop the management of a rope access safe system of work. The standards are mandatory and form the basis of IRATA's membership audits.

The basis of the audit processes is to ensure that member companies:

- Have appropriate business structure and infrastructure in place;
- have safety management systems specific to their fields of application;
- have and use only appropriately experienced, trained and qualified personnel;
- have sufficient risk-assessed equipment and facilities;
- work to mandatory safety standards;
- have ongoing monitoring, review and revision processes to assure their safety performance.

3

INDEPENDENT AUDIT

IRATA companies are subject to audit upon entry to membership, then again at 12 months and three yearly intervals thereafter.

These third-party audits are conducted by trained and qualified lead auditors who have extensive industry experience. Member companies may be subjected to further audits if serious incidents or accidents occur or if ongoing surveillance is required to confirm compliance with membership requirements.

Auditors undergo continual professional development, and their performance is monitored to ensure that audits are conducted to industry best practice.



4 THE IRATA INTERNATIONAL CODE OF PRACTICE

Like any other method of working at height, the application of rope access should be regarded as a complete system in which planning, management, personnel competence and suitable equipment should be treated with importance. Each is dependent on the other to ensure a safe system of work. The IRATA ICOP (International Code of Practice) gives recommendations and guidance on the use of rope access methods to provide such a safe system of work.

The ICOP is the result of extensive consultation with Health & Safety professionals, industry leaders and qualified technical experts.

Member companies and technicians of IRATA International are required to observe the principles of ICOP and must demonstrate compliance at audit.



5

IRATA ROPE ACCESS TECHNICIANS

IRATA technicians are trained and assessed across three competency levels. Level 1 is the entry-level, followed by a Level 2 intermediary, and Level 3 represents advanced industry experience, technical skills and responsibility. Recorded industry experience is required to advance between levels through a monitored logbook system.

All technician levels of competency require rescue skills and capability. This is essential to the IRATA safe system of work as rope access teams are often in remote or difficult to reach locations and may not be able to rely upon third-party emergency response.

All technicians undergo independent assessment conducted in accordance with the IRATA Training, Assessment and Certification Scheme (TACS). Theoretical knowledge, technical skills, attitude to safety and the application of these are tested within the controlled assessment environment of IRATA's audited training facilities.

Member companies regularly review IRATA technicians' skills and knowledge through verification of competency assessments. These processes ensure they are familiar with the issued equipment, the potential work tasks and the environment into which they will be mobilised. Additionally, IRATA technicians are required to undergo refresher training at 6 months if they have not conducted rope access within that period.

6 TECHNICAL AUTHORITY

Every IRATA member company must have a nominated Technical Authority. The Technical Authority must have extensive industry experience and is relied upon to safely guide the rope access activities of the company. Essential prerequisites and responsibilities include:

- Proven knowledge and experience of industrial rope access;
- have previously attained an IRATA Level 3 qualification;
- the ability to create, implement and control an appropriate rope access management system;
- communication of the IRATA requirements to company directors, managers, supervisors and rope access technicians;
- selection and maintenance management of safety equipment;
- ongoing upskilling to stay abreast of industry best practices.



7 ROPE ACCESS EQUIPMENT



Having safe equipment is essential to any safe system of work. Through their Technical Authority, member companies must demonstrate controls that address selection, procurement, traceability, inspection and lifecycle aspects of equipment management. Written procedures are a requirement of audit, as are having competent persons in place to perform checks and thorough recorded inspections.

Rope access works are often undertaken in demanding and aggressive environments, and equipment is subject to daily pre-start inspections to ensure its condition or performance capabilities have not changed. Documented thorough inspections are performed at six monthly intervals or earlier if the conditions of use demand it.

8 OPERATIONAL PLANNING

IRATA member companies must implement procedures that account for all aspects of their rope access activities. Members are required to have a documented Rope Access Management System that includes specific control measures for:

- Risk assessment
- Personnel management, supervision and training
- Internal audit and document control
- Communication with rope access personnel
- Management of equipment
- Rescue planning
- Information security
- Incident management and reporting
- Safety performance review

Members' work and training records are regularly audited, and submissions are required each quarter on hours worked, staffing levels, incidents and other critical tracking data. These statistics are collated by an independently appointed authority and form the basis for IRATA's annual Work And Safety Analysis (WASA) publication.



9 WORK & SAFETY DATA ANALYSIS

Working at height safely is not achieved without careful planning, considered application and constant review. IRATA's safe working record is verified annually through its unique Work and Safety Analysis (WASA) report that has been produced for over 20 years. The document uses quarterly statistics submitted by IRATA member companies, and the data is compiled and analysed by an independent senior health and safety expert.

The completed report is made freely and publicly available on the IRATA website. The contents include:

- Employment data
- Regional statistics
- Work & training hours
- Incidents, accidents, dangerous occurrences figures
- Comparable industry rates
- Summary and recommendations

Member companies commit to sharing information on safety and work-related incidents with their employees, IRATA, and other IRATA members. To augment the annual WASA report, IRATA also produces Safety Bulletins, Safety Incident Reports, Topic Sheets and other safety-related communications.

10 BEST PRACTICE AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

As an international organisation and the global leader in rope access, IRATA recognises the need for collaboration, knowledge sharing and continual professional development.

Company members must attend Regional Advisory Committee or IRATA meetings annually. These bring together member companies, typically within specific regional areas, to discuss the development of IRATA practices, industry changes, equipment and other relevant topics.

Auditors must undergo retraining and professional development on a cyclic, ongoing basis. Importantly, they are also encouraged to contribute to the audit system processes as the industry continues to evolve.

Similarly, assessors and instructors must attend a sanctioned IRATA workshop annually to keep abreast of the technical landscape in which they operate.



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