



## Technical Guidance

Technical Guidance Note  
IPAF USA F1/08/09 on:

# Familiarization and Operator Training

It is the employer's responsibility to ensure that all operators they direct and authorize to use aerial equipment are adequately trained, familiarized and made aware of operator responsibilities to comply with current health and safety requirements.

## Familiarization

All properly trained personnel who are directed and authorized to operate an aerial work platform shall ensure, prior to use, that they are familiarized with the aerial platform to be used, unless they have been provided with familiarization on the same model.

Machine specific familiarization is required in addition to formalized general aerial work platform training and shall include the following:

- The location of the weather resistant storage compartment for manual(s) storage
- Confirming that all required manuals are in the storage compartment
- The purpose and function of all controls and
- Knowledge of the safety devices and operating characteristics of the machine being operated.

**Familiarization or training is not an option - you need both!**

The ANSI A92.6 standard has a definition for familiarization that clearly differentiates it from training.

**Training** is the instruction necessary to enable a trainee to become a qualified person in the task to be performed, including the recognition of potential hazards.

**Familiarization** is the information regarding the control functions and safety devices on a specific aerial work platform to be operated by a qualified person (trained operator).



# Training

ANSI defines general TRAINING to include instructions regarding the inspection, application and operation of the aerial platform, including the recognition and avoidance of hazards. Instructions shall cover a minimum of the following:

- purpose and use of manuals
- operating manuals are an integral part of the aerial platform and must be properly stored on the machine when not in use
- a pre-start inspection
- responsibilities associated with problems or malfunctions affecting the operation of the aerial platform
- factors affecting stability
- the purpose of placards and decals
- workplace inspection
- safety rules and regulations
- authorization to operate
- operator warnings and instructions
- actual operation of the aerial platform under the direction of a qualified person for a sufficient period of time to demonstrate proficiency of use

Familiarization without proper aerial work platform training is NOT acceptable, nor is training without being familiarized on the specific aerial platform to be used. An operator must be TRAINED and FAMILIARIZED before they can be authorized to operate an aerial work platform.

Operator training and familiarization provide a powerful one-two punch to knock out accidents on your job site.

IPAF-approved training centers offer a variety of platform operator training courses. Training is based on ISO 18878, meets OSHA and ANSI requirements, and leads to the issue of a PAL Card (Powered Access Licensed-Registration Card), which is recognized by organizations around the world as proof of training.

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