

Briefing Note - October 2023

# BRITISH STANDARD 7883: 2019

Personal fall protection equipment - Anchor systems -  
system design, installation and inspection

Code of practice



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## 1 – Background

BS 7883: 2019 is a Code of Practice for personal fall protection equipment (PFPE) - anchor systems - system design, installation and inspection. This British Standard provides comprehensive best practice guidance for those designing, installing, maintaining and inspecting anchorage devices used for personal fall protection.

Although this revised standard has been available for several years, it is very much the current industry 'hot topic' as the 2019 standard updated a number of key technical details and requirements that have proved difficult to acquire for existing buildings; and to date, reputable inspection bodies (typically insurers) have not been applying the standard retrospectively. However, this is now changing as some of these inspection bodies will soon be requiring compliance with the standard from January 2024.

With the support of D2E International, we have produced this Briefing Note, in which we detail the most significant requirements of BS 7883: 2019, which dutyholders will need to be aware of.

## 2 – Common Anchor System Types

BS 7883: 2019 incorporates advancements in fall protection technology and offers guidance across the following five common anchor system types:

### BS 7883: 2019 - Anchor Types

TYPE A: Permanently fixed anchor system that incorporates one or more structural anchor such as an eyebolt.



TYPE B: A removable and transportable anchor that does not incorporate a structural anchor so is not fixed to a structure.



TYPE C: A structurally anchored anchorage system featuring a flexible anchor line such as a wire rope, fibre rope or webbing. (NOT ROPE ACCESS)



TYPE D: A structurally anchored anchorage system incorporating a tube or rigid rail anchor line.



TYPE E: Anchor device which relies solely on mass and friction between itself and the load-bearing surface. (NOT ROPE ACCESS unless A-frame design)



BS 7883: 2019 introduces the role of the system designer, responsible for creating the system technical file, the operations and maintenance manual, and the examination scheme. These documents (detailed below) must be provided to the duty holder throughout the system's lifespan and made accessible to users, inspectors, and maintenance personnel.

Whilst there are further requirements in the 2019 update (such as marking, signage and labelling), it is the level of detailed documentation that can be a challenge to achieve compliance for equipment which may have been installed in a property for often considerable periods of time.

### 3 – Required Documentation

The following documentation is now required and will form part of future inspections:

1. **System Technical File:** includes records of system design/layout, design calculations, structural fixing details, as built drawings, and information on hidden elements.
2. **Operations and Maintenance Manual:** contains user instructions, required for PFPS, method statements for use, and a rescue and recovery plan.
3. **Examination Scheme for Inspections:** recommends inspection procedures supplied by the manufacturers/suppliers of the PFPS and the frequency of periodic inspections.

### 4 – Reverse Engineering

If any of these documents are unavailable, an installation review may be necessary. Lack of information on hidden elements such as fixings into the substrate or structure, may require reverse engineering.

Reverse engineering involves accessing hidden anchor system elements by lifting the roof substrate or breaking out the structure. This process checks the suitability through design calculations and manufacturer-supplied information of the anchor system fixings, contributing to the technical file.

### 5 – Consequences of Missing Documentation

The failure to provide the required information under British Standard 7883: 2019 before an inspection, may result in the inspection bodies issuing a conditional failure of the system (see below).

However, if some information is available and a successful physical test can be conducted (when the fixing background is known/unquestionable), a conditional pass with an advisory note may be granted along with a timeline for producing the missing documentation.

## 6 – Inspection Outcomes Explained

British Standard 7883: 2019 introduces four distinct inspection outcomes:

**PASS** – satisfies all relevant recommendations, allowing the equipment to remain in use and labelled as ‘in service’.

**CONDITIONAL PASS** – the anchorage system meets recommendations but requires remedial work within a specified timeframe.

**CONDITIONAL FAIL** – indicates an immediate safety concern, requiring the anchor system or PFPE to be taken out of service until remedial work is completed.

**FAIL** – represents an immediate safety concern where the anchor system or device cannot be repaired and should be taken out of service.

**Correcting conditional pass results outcomes** – actions to correct conditional past results should be completed promptly or within an appropriate timescale. Failure to implement these actions within the timescale may lead to a conditional fail on the next inspection.

**Should you require and further information relating to this Briefing Note or more general working at height advice, please do get in touch.**

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