

Flag Flying Procedures & Safety Checks

Flag Flying

► Stage 1 – Checks

- Always examine the flag to ensure it is fit for purpose. No flag should be flown where found to be torn, ripped etc. or where the fittings to secure the flag to the flagpole are damaged that may result in the flag coming loose.

► Stage 2 – Prepare the halyard

- The halyard is the rope to which the flag is attached and then hoisted up the flagpole. The halyard is a length of rope that is looped by joining snaphooks found at each end or in some cases a loop at one end of the halyard.
Un wrap the halyard from the cleat and lower the halyard by pulling on the rope to reach the joining section of the halyard with the snaphooks.
When separating the snaphooks be careful not to let go that may result in the halyard rising to the top of the flagpole.

► Stage 3 -Attach the flag

- Attach the top of the flag normally identified by a wooden toggle to the top snaphook or the looped end of the halyard and attach the bottom snaphook to the looped rope of the flag. Be sure to attach the top of the flag to the top snaphook.

Raising a flag inverted is internationally recognised as a distress signal.

Do not allow the flag to touch the floor upon attaching it to the halyard.



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► Stage 4 – Releasing and raising the flag

- Whilst holding onto both sides of the halyard, pull down slowly on the side of the halyard that the flag has not been attached to, allowing the other side of the halyard to run through your hands carefully that will see the flag being raised.

Raise the flag to the truck head, this is the top of the flagpole, where a pulley system is installed to enable a smooth elevation of the flag.

► Stage 5 – Secure halyard to cleat

- Ensure the flag has been raised to the top of the truck head and keeping the tension on the halyard so as not to allow the flag to drop down, wrap the halyard in a figure of eight method around the cleat. Take the last turn of the halyard between the flagpole and the halyard itself above the cleat.



Secure halyard to cleat



Half-mast flying

► Stage 6 – Half Mast flying

- When raising a flag to the half-mast position the flag should be raised to the top of the flagpole first, leaving the flag in this position for a few seconds then lowered to the half-mast position.

Half-mast is two-thirds of the way up the flagpole.





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► Stage 7 – Inclement weather- strong winds

- In strong winds, i.e. over force 6/30mph, all flags should, to safeguard the flag and flagpole/mast, be lowered and may be replaced with storm flags (one third of the normal size).
- Where wind speeds are in excess of force 8/45mph, all flags should be removed and not flown until such a time when wind speeds have subsided.

Beaufort scale/wind speed Chart

FLAG	BEAUFORT NUMBER	WIND	MPH
Flag – Normal Size	0 – 6	Calm – Strong Breeze	Less than 1 – 31mph
Storm Flags	7 – 8	Moderate Gale Fresh Gale	32 – 46mph
No Flags	9 – 12	Strong Hurricane Force	47mph & Above 75mph



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Safety Checks – Post Inclement Weather

- ▶ Following inclement weather, strong winds, flagpoles should undergo a visual inspection to ensure no damage has subsequently been caused.
 - Anchor plate/fittings – Check there is no movement within the anchor fitting of the flagpole ensuring all nuts/bolts hinge pins where applicable are secure and free from damage.
 - Cleat – Check the cleat has not come loose and is secure to the flagpole.



Check Anchor-plate Fittings



Check the Cleat

- Halyard – Check the halyard has not been damaged, by pulling the halyard up and down the flagpole looking along the rope to check for frays and to ensure free movement through the finial. Damage of the halyard could result in subsequent failure when flying a flag under tension later.



Check the Halyard

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Safety Checks – Post Inclement Weather

- Finial – Undertake a visual inspection of the finial to ensure it has not been damaged and is complete and secure.
- Flagpole Wall – Check the flagpole itself, to ensure no damage has been caused to the wall of the flagpole by adjacent infrastructure, trees etc that may have struck the flagpole effecting its integrity.



Check the Finial



Check the Flagpole Wall

- Additional support collars/arms – Check any additional support arms to ensure all fittings are secure. Look for any movement/slipping of the collars up/down the flagpole by signs of surface condition.

Upon completing a visual inspection, report any anomalies immediately to your line manager.

If in doubt do not commence with flying the flag, until confirmation has been given, that it is safe to do so.





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Safety Checks – Post Inclement Weather

We would recommend recording all visual inspections.
An example of an inspection form is found below.

Site Address/Flagpole Location:			
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Date:	Time:	Date:	Time:
<hr/>			
<i>Inspection undertaken by</i>			
Name:			
<hr/>			
Signature:			
<hr/>			

COMPONENTS	X	✓	COMMENTS <i>Enter further comments in the main box below</i>
Structure/Damage			
Anchor Fittings/Supports			
Support Collars/Wires			
Cleat/Winch Mechanism			
Halyard(s)			
Finial/Truck Head			

Further comments/recommendations remedial works:

