

# Information for Riggers Seeking Employment

**The purpose of this document is to assist freelance riggers find employment and be prepared for the varying situations arising from freelance rigging work.**

The information provided in this document is generic advice, intended for use as a starting point for both parties to broker a constructive deal that acknowledges the risks and fulfills the project requirements satisfactorily. It may not be suitable for your project or requirements.

**Please use advice listed here as a guide, ensure due diligence is done when engaging in High-Risk Work.**

## When working in the CaPT sector a freelance rigger must have:

- A rigging qualification (High-Risk Work Licence)
- Relevant rigging experience in the circus and physical theatre industry
- Strong knowledge of WorkSafe rules and regulations, including how to prepare Safe Working Method Statements (SWMS)
- ABN (Australian Business Number)
- Rigging equipment and tools including PPE
- Knowledge of circus acts, in particular aerial apparatus
- Admin and organisational skills such as planning, scheduling, accounting, stakeholder relationship management

## It is recommended to have:

- Public Liability Rigging Insurance
- Workcover
- Complementary licenses and qualifications such as Elevated Work Platform (EWP), Forklift, HR Truck, Working at Heights etc
- Access to a range of rigging equipment
- A community of riggers to support you in general and assist with larger or more complicated projects
- Experience using digital tools e.g. drawing/rigging programs for diagrams and plans etc
- Access to a rehearsal space

## Rigging Standards

There are currently no official standards for circus rigging in Australia and there are many different procedures and techniques used throughout the industry.

When undertaking rigging work there are many factors to consider such as engineering requirements, dynamic forces, and apparatus manufacturing. A rigger should have significant knowledge of procedures considered by the industry to be common and acceptable rigging technique before taking on independent rigging work.

[WorkSafe Victoria](#) is a fantastic resource for information and advice. While they are unlikely to know details specific to circus rigging and aerial performance, they will be able to advise on how your project fits into WorkSafe regulations and what are necessary steps from a WorkSafe point of view.

Live Performance Australia (LPA) also has useful documents:

- [Performer hazard guide](#)
- [Audience and Crowd management guide](#)

## Questions to consider

### Do I need to be an Advanced rigger?

Legally you do not need to be an Advanced rigger unless you are rigging suspended scaffolding, guyed derricks, or cable ways. However, LPA does recommend an Advanced rigger for aerial circus acts, and this is industry standard.

### How much experience is enough?

This depends on the job at hand. If you are planning to manage large scale tours with multiple venues, aerial acts and performer flying, you should be an Advanced rigger with extensive experience i.e. having been qualified for at least 5 to 10 years.

If you want to install a single point, hard-rigged in a venue with existing engineering documentation, being a Basic rigger with 2 years' experience and an understanding of performer safety requirements is sufficient.

### Do I need engineering?

Engineer Certification is a critical part of rigging. A structure or building **MUST** have an engineer's report detailing the allowable loads and critical technical information. The venue owner/manager should provide the engineering report of the building. Some equipment comes with pre-existing engineering documentation. For example, aluminium truss has a load chart detailing the allowable loads.



## **Do I need insurance?**

Public Liability Insurance is always required by festivals, theatres and events. A rigger should also have their own Public Liability Insurance and rigging insurance. When taking on a rigging contract, there should be a clear conversation about what activities are covered by which parties' insurance.

For more information about insurance for the Circus and Physical Theatre (CaPT) sector, [read TNA's Circus Insurance Deep Dive.](#)

## **How much should I charge?**

Rigging rates vary depending on the level of experience, risk, insurance status, and any equipment and preparation time required. It's common to see \$50 to \$100 an hour.