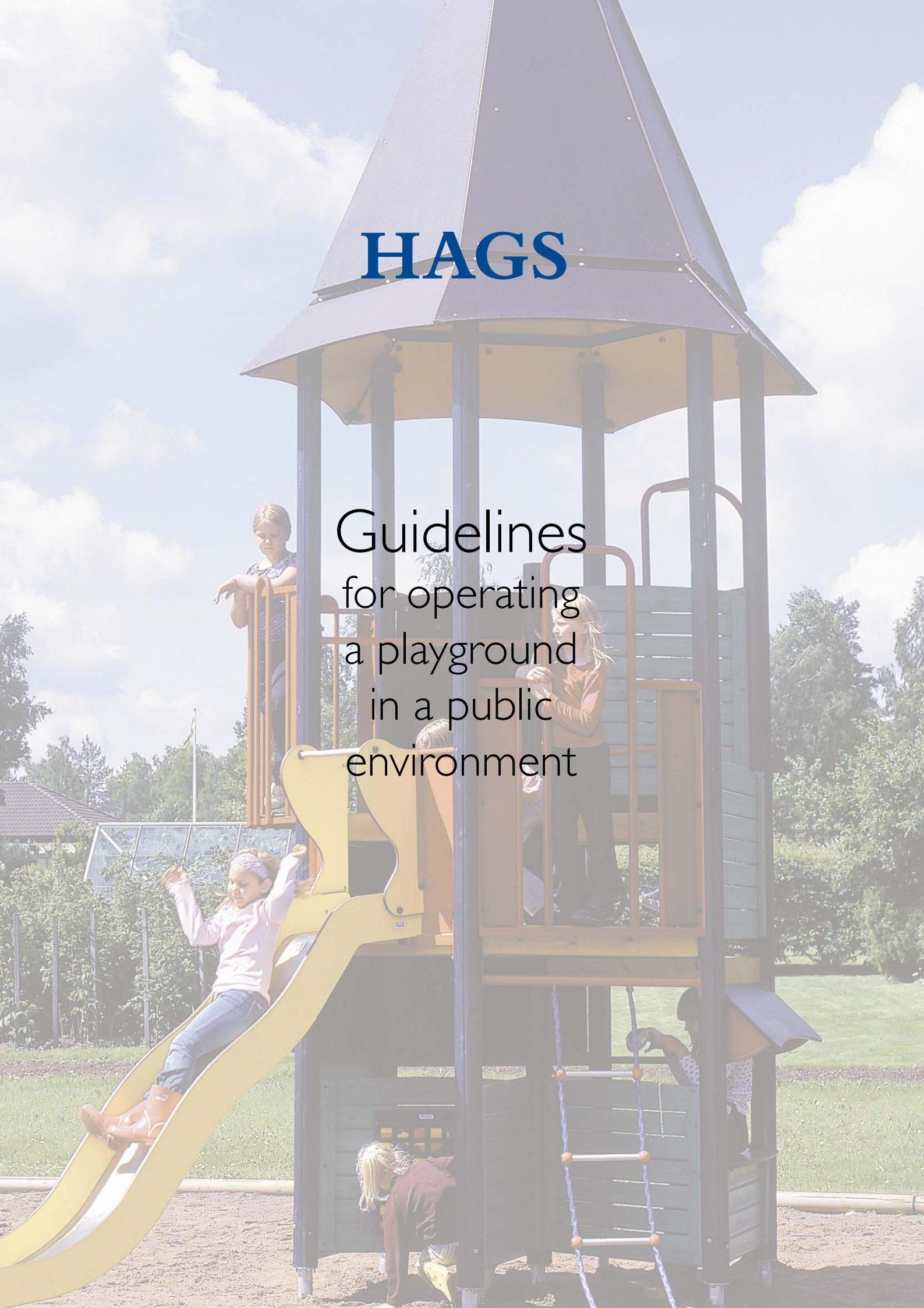


HAGS

Guidelines
for operating
a playground
in a public
environment



Guidelines for operating a playground in a public environment

Operation - Installation - Maintenance - Inspection

Guidelines for operating a playground

Preface

“Guidelines for operating a playground” comprises general information that can be used as a basis for the purchase, planning, installation and operation of playgrounds.

Local regulations at the location where the playground is being built may be drawn up in such a way that it is not possible to follow the guidelines in full. However, the safety of those using the playground must always be guaranteed. Guarantees and certificates are only valid on the condition that the playground equipment is installed and maintained in accordance with the enclosed instructions.

This document, “Guidelines for operating a playground in a public environment”, is a concept describing how a playground may be run. The prevailing European standard, EN 1176-1177, always takes precedence.

General

Routines relating to operation, installation, maintenance and inspection must be drawn up.

If necessary, routines/procedures must also be drawn up for extreme weather conditions such as heat, cold, rain, snow, wind, etc.

I Operation

General

The Operations Manager sets up a suitable system in the organisation to guarantee and maintain safety. The operating plan is drawn up by the person responsible for running the playground. This operating plan describes the routines for installation, maintenance, inspection and operation.

An operating plan can include playgrounds in residential areas, blocks, parts of a city or all playgrounds in the municipality. If necessary several operating plans can be drawn up. The operating plan must clearly define its scope.

Safety must be guaranteed for the playground throughout its service life, in accordance with the requirements of prevailing, applicable standards.

Operations Manager

At regular intervals, and at least once a year, the Operations Manager must review the results of inspections and maintenance work undertaken, and if required change the routines.

Staff

Staff who perform tasks within the framework of running the playground must have the required, suitable competence for the various tasks. Staff must have sufficient, relevant information in respect of tasks, authority and responsibility.

The required level of competence depends on the nature of the tasks, and training might therefore be necessary.

Special tasks that can have an impact on the construction and safety of playground equipment, e.g. welding, concrete casting, safety inspections, must be conducted by people with authorisation that is valid for the tasks in question.

Documentation

The Operations Manager is responsible for ensuring that documentation relating to the playground is stored in a satisfactory way; it must be available to all staff concerned with responsibility for running the playground. Documentation should contain: purchase documents, installation instructions for playground equipment, delivery date, inspection record, certificate valid on date of delivery, maintenance routines, operating routines and information on which members of staff are authorised to perform tasks in accordance with the specified operating routines.

General safety measures/Signage

At every playground a sign should be displayed containing the following:

- Phone number of the emergency service in the event of an alarm.
- Phone number of the person responsible for operations and reports of serious damage.

Entrances, exits and evacuation routes to and from the playground, intended for the use of both the general public and the emergency service, should always be accessible and free of any obstruction.

Local regulations in respect of safety in the playground must be observed.

Personal injuries

Information about accidents that are reported to the Operations Manager should be reported on a special form (HAGS form 4117).

Routines

If deficiencies arise that threaten safety at the playground, they must be rectified immediately. If this is not possible, the playground must be put out of action, or entry to the playground stopped, until the deficiencies have been rectified.

Information about accidents/damage that are reported to the Operations Manager should be reported on a special form (HAGS form 4117), and contain the following information:

- The time of the accident (date, time)
- The age, gender, clothing and footwear of the person who was injured
- On which piece of equipment the accident happened. The number of children involved when the accident occurred
- An account of the accident
- The scope of the injury
- Action taken
- Witness statements
- Any changes made as a result of the accident

Personal safety

The performance of repair work that might endanger the safety of staff and users should be avoided when the site is in use.

Changes to playground equipment

Changes to playground equipment, or changes to parts of the playground equipment and its design, are only permitted in consultation with the manufacturer or another person with the required competence within this field. When a change is made, a new certificate is issued for the whole piece of equipment to which the change relates.

2 Installation

General

Information relating to installation is compiled before installation commences. Information necessary for installation is, for example, positioning, space requirements, shaft depth, choice of impact-absorbent surface, installation times (staff requirement), machinery required for excavation, unloading or other assistance during installation (if relevant).

Excavation and filling must be completed as far as possible before installation work commences. Installation must be undertaken in accordance with the enclosed instructions. Members of staff must have the required competence, e.g. for casting concrete. Refilling must take place in such a way that none of the components of the playground equipment or all of the playground equipment changes position or is in any other way deformed.

Safety

The general public must be prevented from gaining access until all work on the playground has been completed. This also includes the impact-absorbent material of the smooth surface.

Staff

Members of staff should be familiar with the prevailing standards for playground equipment. Staff must be informed of their tasks, authority and responsibility with regard to installation at the playground in question.

Receipt of deliveries

The scope of mechanical assistance required in connection with unloading deliveries is determined in plenty of time before a delivery arrives. Unloading and storage of the goods must be undertaken in such a way that they are not damaged.

Shafts/filling

Digging of shafts, filling and any excavation (turf, mud, topsoil, etc.) must be undertaken in such a way that there is no subsequent settlement. Drainage must be installed as required.

Installation

Installation must always be undertaken in accordance with the instructions enclosed with the product in question when delivered. Installation must be undertaken correctly and using staff with the required competence for the task.

Before starting installation, each shaft base must have the correct foundation depth and be correctly levelled off and compressed. Sort out the components into separate parts - poles, bases, screens, etc. Assemble in the sequence described in the instructions. Take care to assemble the components horizontally and vertically respectively, unless otherwise described in the instructions. When installation is complete, check screws and bolts and tighten as required.

Securing/anchoring

The equipment is secured to the ground using prefabricated concrete foundations, ground anchors or concrete casting on site. If concrete is cast on site, the concrete strength must be at least equivalent to that prescribed in the installation instructions. It will sometimes be necessary to have a deeper foundation when using loose fillings with a low volume weight such as bark, wood chips, etc. Please contact your HAGS representative for further details.

Concrete casting

If concrete is cast at the installation site, the concrete strength must be at least equivalent to that prescribed, and the strength class must be at least equivalent to C 20/25, with a consistency class between S1 and S3, in accordance with the European standard for concrete (EN 206-1). To achieve the prescribed concrete strength in a shorter time, a higher concrete strength class may be selected. Items to be

cast must be secured before casting commences.

All concrete work must be conducted by staff with the required competence and in a correct way.

Refilling

Refilling must be undertaken in such a way as to ensure that the playground equipment is not moved or does not alter its position within the playground. Refilling must be undertaken to the foundation depth of the impact-resistant material. The correct refilling material must be selected, depending on what material is used for the smooth surface.

Play area and surface

Around each item of playground equipment a smooth surface is prepared of impact-resistant material, which reduces the risk of accident in the event of someone falling. The required area of the smooth surface is defined in the enclosed installation instructions. The impact-resistant material's properties and thickness are adapted to the height of the drop from the piece of equipment, and they must satisfy the requirements of the prevailing standard.

Material must be chosen on the basis of the functional requirements of the users, e.g. access for young people with disabilities.

Inspection

When installation and groundwork is complete, an inspection must be conducted with regard to safety, function and installation. Any deficiencies must be rectified before the equipment can be used. Installation instructions are saved and documented in accordance with the operating plan.

3 Maintenance

General

To minimise the risk of accident, routines must be drawn up for maintenance, and these must be implemented and maintained. Reference is made to issues such as local conditions and the information provided by the manufacturer for each product. This can be of great significance for the required inspection frequency. The routines must state which parts must be maintained. Information on the maintenance of playground equipment is compiled in the general operating plan drawn up by the Operations Manager. An operating plan can include playgrounds, residential areas, blocks or all playgrounds in the municipality. The scope of this must be defined in the operating plan.

Staff

Staff working in the maintenance organisation must have the necessary competence for the tasks in question. Staff must be provided with the relevant information on their work tasks, authority and responsibly. Repair work that can endanger the safety of staff and/or users should be avoided when the site is in use. The general public should not be allowed access when repair work is in progress.

Routine maintenance

Routines for maintenance can be changed in due course on the basis of experience, extension work, changed conditions, etc. Routine maintenance includes preventive action to maintain the playground's safety level and function. Such action should include, for example, but is not limited to the following:

- Tightening of screws and screw unions.
- Wire tension (ropeway)
- Maintenance painting
- Maintenance of impact-resistant surface
- Lubrication
- Cleaning
- Topping up of loose filling material
- Maintenance of the area around the playground
- Corrective action for sites with a winter climate

Corrective maintenance

This kind of maintenance includes faults or deficiencies that are rectified to restore function and safety to the required level for the equipment or the impact-resistant surface. Maintenance and repairs that are considered to have an impact on the playground equipment's safety may only be undertaken by staff with the required competence or authority.

Such kinds of action might include:

- Replacement of screws or suspended elements
- Replacement of worn or defective parts
- Welding of defective parts

Changes to playground equipment

Changes to parts of the playground equipment or its design are only permitted in consultation with the manufacturer or another person with the required competence within this field. Changes to equipment or designs must always be approved by the Operations Manager. When a change is made, a new certificate is issued for the whole piece of equipment to which the change relates. Certificates must be issued by an accredited testing body within the EU.

4 Inspection

General

The Operations Manager draws up a suitable inspection schedule together with documentation of the staff included in the inspection organisation. All members of staff who perform inspections must have the required competence. Staff must be informed of their responsibility, e.g. preventing the general public from gaining access to the playground when safety cannot be guaranteed. Documentation of completed inspections must be produced in accordance with the operating plan that has been drawn up, and it must be available to the relevant members of staff. The operating plan must guarantee that deficiencies identified during an inspection are rectified in accordance with the routines for inspection and maintenance.

Inspection schedule

The Operations Manager draws up a suitable inspection schedule, covering the playgrounds to which the operating plan relates. The inspection schedule takes into account local conditions, the manufacturer's instructions and specifies items requiring special attention during the inspection.

Staff

Staff must be familiar with and have the required competence with regard to standards for playground equipment. Staff must be informed of their work tasks, authority and responsibility with regard to inspections at the playground in question.

Routine visual inspection

This inspection makes it possible to identify deficiencies that have occurred as a result of, for example, vandalism, wear or the effects of weather. Such an inspection may be conducted by staff who have regular contact with the playground, but do not necessarily have in-depth expertise in respect of safety to the prevailing standard, as a daily visual inspection may be required.

Functional inspection

A more comprehensive inspection, which includes a check on functionality and stability. Special attention should be paid to parts that are subject to wear (moving parts). This inspection must be undertaken at least 1-3 times a year.

Annual inspection

An annual inspection must be planned on the basis of the circumstances prevailing for the playground in question. During this inspection an assessment is made of whether the playground's safety can be maintained until the next annual inspection. During an annual inspection an overall assessment must be made on the basis

of the equipment's safety level, which might have been affected by the weather; repairs undertaken or the replacement of components. Special attention is paid to deficiencies such as rot and corrosion when inspecting older pieces of equipment. The inspection must be conducted by a person with professional expertise, with due reference to the manufacturer's instructions.

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