



IRATA services

IRATA manages the training of technicians and their subsequent registration, creates the procedures, instructions and guidance that control the work of its members, and assists these member companies to keep abreast of the national and international standards and regulations that affect industrial rope access.

IRATA members

The member companies of IRATA range from large international concerns to small and specialist businesses. Some offer training for rope access technicians, others are operating companies supplying rope access services, whilst many combine these two activities. There are IRATA companies in every continent; a full list is available at www.irata.org.

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IRATA International

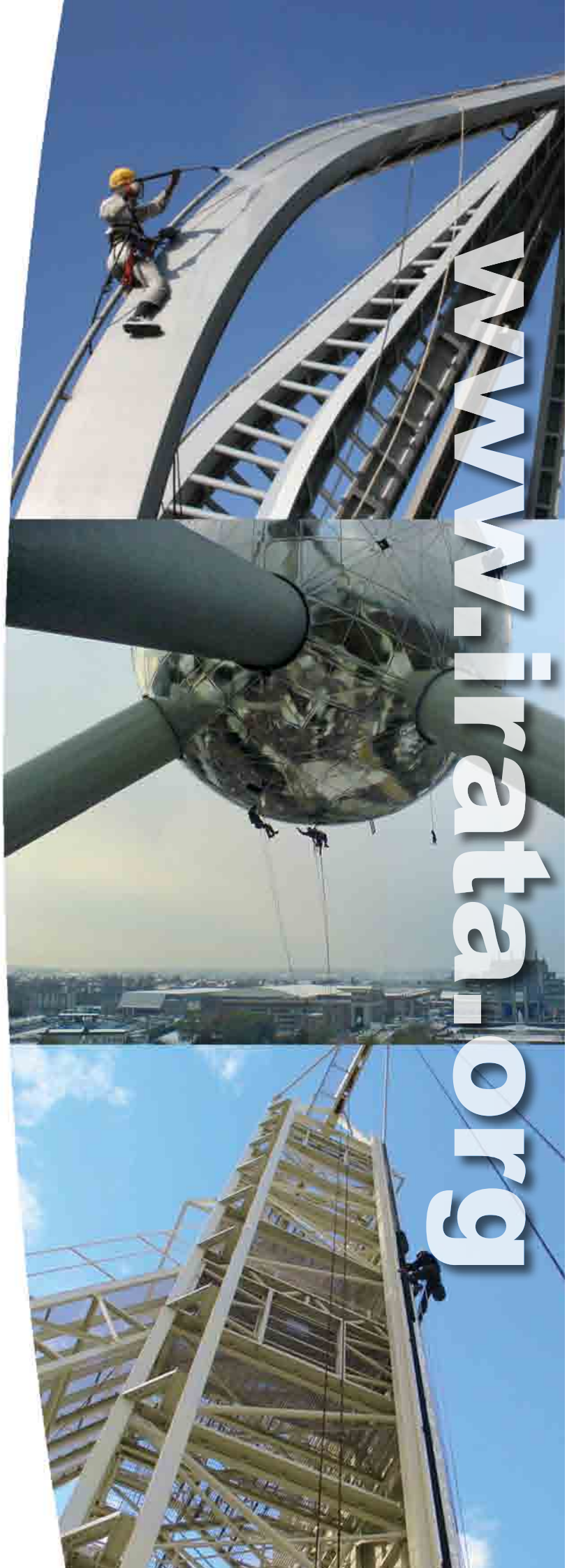
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IRATA International

The Industrial Rope Access Trade Association



The remarkable IRATA story

Industrial rope access, as trained for and operated by the member companies of IRATA International, has come a long way in its 23 years. From the point where it was created to meet a specific need to solve maintenance problems in the offshore industry, rope access has distinguished itself as an integral part of the work-at-height sector around the world and has achieved this alongside a safe working record that is unrivalled in this sector. This in turn has earned the admiration of the markets it serves and the men and women it employs.

The work solutions it offered the oil and gas industry have proved so adaptable in this sector that the tasks its members now complete offshore are more varied and substantial than the basic maintenance work that was typical back in the 1990s. Indeed, such are the advantages that rope access offers that it has proved itself to be able to undertake major projects that have been beyond other access methods. Furthermore, IRATA rope access is the required partner for many of the leading global and national offshore companies and offers its services around the world.

But the work solutions IRATA was offering also proved valuable onshore and men on ropes have, for many years, been offering a vast portfolio of work in a wide range of repair, maintenance, inspection and other access work. Today, IRATA teams are at work in every continent and as likely to be seen on the world's iconic sites of the world as they are in your local town or industrial site.

Many clients are drawn to IRATA companies because of the unrivalled record of safe working these businesses can claim whilst all benefit from the quick set-up and dismantling times they can offer. Add to this the unmatched positive environmental benefits rope access offers, and the fact it needs no invasive access equipment, and you can see that it is truly a 'user friendly' means of access.

IRATA has grown substantially in recent years and now reports on more than nine million hours spent on ropes each year by the rope access technicians employed by its member companies. Independently compiled reports prove beyond doubt that this is a very safe means of working at height.



IRATA around the world

The IRATA two-rope, fail-to-safe method of working has solved so many access problems around the world that the Association now has member companies in every continent, with more joining every month; it is the only truly global Association in its sector. IRATA has taken safe working at height around the world and seen general work procedures improved because of its influence. Its extensive use by major companies, administrations and governments who approve of its high standards has also raised the profile of IRATA work procedures and the member companies of the Association.

In order to better manage the communication between the Association administration and its members, seven Regional Advisory Committees have been created in areas of high membership whilst its senior office holders and committee members now travel extensively to meet with member companies wherever they are situated.

Through its substantial control documents, of which the International Code of Practice is the most recent, IRATA prepares the way for its member companies and rope access technicians to have confidence in the proven work method that has seen IRATA lead the advance of industrial rope access as a 21st century work solution.

Some of the iconic world famous sites on which IRATA teams have worked:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Big Ben | Canterbury Cathedral |
| Eiffel Tower | Burj Al Arab Hotel |
| Sydney Opera House | Tower Bridge |
| Bahrain World Trade Centre | Wynne Casino Las Vegas |
| Wembley Stadium | Spinnaker Tower UK |
| Hoover Dam | Clifton Suspension Bridge |
| Seattle Space Needle | Mount Rushmore USA |
| Dubai International Airport | The Eden Project |
| St Helena Island | The Forth Rail Bridge |
| The London Eye | O2 Arena |
| The Burj Kalifa Dubai | Millennium Stadium Cardiff |
| Chapman's Peak | Singapore Flyer (Wheel) |
| Tower Bridge | BT Tower |
| Emirates Tower Dubai | Old Trafford Stadium |
| Heathrow Airport | CN Tower Toronto |
| Luxor Hotel Las Vegas | and many more! |





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Shipping & harbours

Because of its speed of setting up and removing itself from a work site, industrial rope access has great benefits for harbours and shipping. Because of their ability to work even between tides or during very short harbour visits, IRATA teams yet again provide solutions no other method can. Dry docks and other harbour structures can be attended to more quickly than if access structures had to be brought in and, remember, rope access teams can remove all equipment at the end of each day.

An added benefit offered to shipping by means of IRATA rope access methods is the ability to work on a vessel without it even entering port, or waiting for a dock to become available. And rope access technicians have also worked on the dismantling of redundant ships, again because of the ability to work without an access structure.



IRATA - The guarantee

Working at height safely is not achieved without diligence and application. IRATA's safe working record has been verified in its unique Work and Safety Analysis that has been produced for the last 20 years. The document is produced from member company statistics and compiled by a senior Health and Safety expert who is encouraged by the Association to produce the report he wishes; it is made available to all associated with our industry sector. These reports have shown zero fatalities whilst working on ropes and an incident rate that is far below that reported by any government or trade body.

The IRATA assurance of safe and responsible working is based on:

- Audited and regularly re-audited member companies
- Tough membership entry criteria
- Many thousands of rope access technicians who have been thoroughly trained and are required to re-train every three years
- The independent assessment of every IRATA trainee technician wherever in the world he is trained
- An unrivalled level of site supervision
- Mandatory work procedures that are a constant wherever IRATA teams operate

IRATA companies complete their work with confidence and assurance, the certainty of expertise and the value of a service that has proved itself around the world.



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Your route to IRATA members

You can find IRATA member companies in every continent. Some are training companies, others are operators, whilst a good number handle both tasks. Each and every member has had to complete an exacting audit to secure membership and will spend some time as a Probationary Member before another successful audit will see them attain Full membership.

Members are required to employ the procedures prescribed by the Association through its control documents both in respect of their behaviour as members and the delivery of their training and operational work. Clients are therefore assured of a consistency of approach and the level of service offered; they can also view the International Code of Practice that delivers the training and the prescribed work methods.

All bone-fide members of the Association are able to quote a Unique Membership Number, which also appears in their listing on the IRATA website. The inability to provide a valid UMN denotes the company is *not* a current member of IRATA.





The natural environment

Cliffs and high rocks are seldom in a position where semi-permanent access can be employed but natural wear and tear, the sea and weather erosion present problems that have to be addressed. IRATA companies have worked on many large-scale sites in several continents where the stabilisation work they undertook has saved historic views, maintained roadways and even kept substantial land masses from being lost forever. Some other locations are part of the sports or tourist industry which is sometimes more ready than others to believe rope access is a likely answer to their problem.

Long established road and rail embankments are seldom easily dealt with by means other than rope access and clearing rock for road widening is also a task often allocated to IRATA teams. Amongst the large scale work undertaken by IRATA rope access teams in the natural environment are The Rock of Gibraltar, the island of St Helena, and Chapman's Peak in South Africa.





The built environment

Industrial rope access can be seen in every major city, large town or industrial complex. There are many reasons for the growth in the use of rope access in these locations but chief amongst them is the much-prized 'minimal environment footprint' that IRATA delivers; no blocked streets, no choking fumes from access machinery, reduced energy costs, no ugly access structures closing walkways and no noise! There is little wonder that men on ropes, often operating on buildings without those inside even knowing they are there, are popular with building managers, environmental services personnel, and urban authorities.

With safety concerns regarding some forms of access and new building design often prohibiting the use of other methods, IRATA rope access has come into its own around modern architecture. But then the absence of built or heavy motorised access around all types of property also sees the use of ropes preferred for much inspecting and repairing work.

IRATA International is often consulted by architects and designers to ensure their more dramatic styling can be handled by rope access once the building is complete. And check the wide range of iconic structures around the world that are entrusted to IRATA work teams – see p15.



The IRATA International Code of Practice and other documents

From its outset IRATA International has trained and worked to strict guidelines that have delivered the consistency and safe working that is so prized by clients. In 2010 the Association replaced its Guidelines with a 130page International Code of Practice in order to continue to provide a comprehensive and current 'route map' that would enable diligent training and sound operating techniques to remain the key drivers of the work of member companies.

The document will be updated as required so that it can serve as thorough and clear guidance for those working in rope access around the world and demonstrate to those employing such workers that their training and work is to a plan based on experience and clear directions.

The world of work-at-height has not been well served by those who do not show this level of diligence and prefer to work to a pattern driven by assumption and guesswork rather than tried and tested methods. Be sure you are obtaining rope access services from an IRATA member company; **ask to see the company's IRATA Unique Membership Number.**



IRATA - Training for excellence

The training given to IRATA technicians follows a strict work-based syllabus that delivers highly-committed personnel who are determined to deliver safe working. Those conducting the training are rope access experts, not general work-at-height instructors, and have many years of experience. And yet it is not they who adjudicate on the ability of their students as an independent assessor is brought in at the end of every course, wherever in the world it is held, to pass or fail the trainees.

The IRATA rope access technician is therefore a very effective worker on his first day of employment but he will, of course, develop extra work skills as he progresses through his early years of work. The Association encourages both career progression and a maintenance of skill levels so each technician is required to re-train and re-register every three years so that he can demonstrate he has retained all necessary abilities; he may also progress through three levels, each demanding greater work knowledge and range of skills. The IRATA Level 3 technician will be capable of supervising the most complex of sites.

It is all too common for industrial training to be non-specific and superficial; this is where bad practice starts and it is not something this Association subscribes to.



Civil engineering

Because of its non-mechanical means of access, its ability to reach and work in confined spaces, its minimal impact on the surrounding area and its ability to adapt to the limited availability on some worksites, IRATA rope access offers special benefit to the civil engineer. Designs and structures of the past were seldom built with repair and maintenance in mind and were thus often not conveniently sited or designed for working on today. Modern designs are often extravagant and, of course, constructing to great height is increasingly common. All this is of little concern to an efficient rope access team who can move around the most complex of structures by means of their ropes alone and can either carry the necessary tools with them or use another rope to deliver them to the required position.

It can sometimes be that just one particular part of a major structure is impossible to reach by the method being used for the remainder of it. In such cases the need to devise a major additional means of access can be prevented by recourse to rope access.



Wind Power and Renewables

In similar fashion to the manner in which IRATA rope access was the access solution chosen for so much offshore oil and gas work so it has found its values appreciated by the burgeoning renewables sector. In the same way that built access was replaced by IRATA for much offshore work at height, so it has been necessary to find a means of servicing wind turbines that does not slow the process of power generation down because of the means of access chosen.

IRATA teams can access all parts of a wind turbine – be it on land or offshore - in a manner that is faster and more convenient than any other system....and rope access technicians are used to much more testing environments! And so it is that the simple, non-motorised methods used by IRATA are being insisted upon by yet another part of industry that, because of its high-technology and sophistication, might not have expected to make such a decision. Because IRATA is a worldwide Association it is well placed to service this major new work sector.



Beyond Training - Safe for Life

The industrial sector in general, and that tackling work-at-height in particular, can be somewhat cavalier with regard to both the level of training given and the controls placed on the workforce once training has been completed; **IRATA is different!**

Initial training should not be expected to last a lifetime and when the work being undertaken is at height or in areas of difficult access then it can be dangerous if such a belief is present. Though IRATA has over 20 years of evidence of having worked safely it still requires every rope access worker registered with them to re-train every three years for the sole reason to ensure that the worker himself, and those who employ him, can be confident that his work skills have been maintained.

The work IRATA rope access technicians do is diligently recorded by their employers and themselves. The statistics provided by the employing members is used to create an annual Work and Safety Analysis that is independently compiled by an industry expert; IRATA has no say on what he chooses to write. This is another example of IRATA 'going the extra mile' to monitor its own performance.





Offshore Oil & Gas - Major Works

IRATA International is proud to have delivered safe work-at-height to this sector for more than 20 years. Such has been the ability of rope access to deliver offshore work solutions that it is now entrusted with more complex and testing work than had previously been expected to be tackled by rope access.

One such major project was the use of IRATA technicians within the concrete legs of an offshore platform. Between 2005-2010 an engineering project was undertaken to inspect, remove and replace a series of hydrocarbon lines inside the concrete legs on three offshore production platforms in the North Sea. This was a task that had previously been carried out by teams of commercial divers using rope access techniques but now this complex and challenging task - in terms of the site location and the potential hazards intrinsic in any confined space work - was completed safely and effectively by up to 80 rope access technicians across three worksites.

These advanced work skills are destined to be increasingly required of IRATA teams.





Offshore Oil & Gas - Maintenance & Repair

The ability of IRATA rope teams to work without additional means of access, other than their ropes and the necessary points of attachment, means they can be set-up and working in any situation within minutes. This is especially beneficial on deep sea platforms where space is always at a premium – this was the primary reason for rope access being first used on these structures over 20 years ago – and it means essential inspection, repair and maintenance work can be completed with minimal disruption to the vital work of the rig.

IRATA work teams can access almost every part of these complex locations from working on the cranes and high metalwork to tackling other work in the hectic and treacherous spaces far below the main platform floor.

IRATA is also active within onshore power and petro-chemical sites that are usually complex and tangled areas where rope access teams can solve access issues that other methods cannot.

