

# INDUSTRY WIDE LABOR-MANAGEMENT SAFETY COMMITTEE

## SAFETY BULLETIN #4

### STUNTS

The following recommendations and guidelines are intended to give general guidance on the preparation, set-up, and performance of stunt sequences. Hereafter, a stunt sequence refers to any instance of a stunt rehearsal and on-camera performance.

Stunts should involve appropriate production workers, including Department Head(s), to engage in the necessary planning and execution of the proposed activities. Refer to the appropriate safety bulletins and also refer to Addendum "A" – *Specialized Activities* for additional guidelines.

#### **Production Management Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of Production Management, or a designated representative, to ensure that the procedures set out in this guideline are completed to ensure the safety of all persons involved in the stunt.

Production Management should allow enough time for rehearsals, training, equipment preparations, and inspections.

Production Management should comply with requests and requirements for safety equipment that is generally accepted in the industry for safe and proper performance of stunts.

Whenever there is a stunt sequence, Production Management should require that an individual qualified (by knowledge, experience, and training in planning, setting up, and/or performing the type of stunt involved) be engaged and present on the set.

In conjunction with the Stunt Coordinator, hire qualified personnel to oversee respective elements of the stunt sequence.

#### **Stunt Coordinator Responsibilities**

A Stunt Coordinator, Assistant Stunt Coordinator, and/or qualified individual (collectively, the Stunt Coordinator) is in charge of all aspects of the proposed stunt activities, including script review, planning, site selection, preparation, testing, rehearsal, modification, and recommendation of the qualified personnel and equipment to be utilized to perform the stunt.

The Stunt Coordinator's responsibilities also include:

- Determine what cast & crew members should be excluded from the stunt area. Perimeter control should be established and maintained. The Stunt Coordinator should be involved in the safe placement of cameras, camera operators, and all essential cast & crew.
- Be present whenever a stunt is being planned or performed including the period leading up to the performance.

- Know the standards, rules, and regulations applicable to the stunt sequence.
- Inform Production Management if there is a need for additional emergency services not already present at the production for the stunt sequence.

Any concerns of the Stunt Coordinator should be brought to Production Management to make sure that said concerns are addressed before moving forward with the stunt sequence.

## **Performers**

The Stunt Coordinator should make clear to the Performer(s) what the stunt sequence will entail before moving forward. A cast member who does not agree to perform the stunt sequence may always request a double.

## **Training**

The Stunt Coordinator, in consultation with Production Management, should make sure that only those people who have the necessary competence, knowledge, experience, and training are involved in stunt work.

If a Performer requires training, it can be carried out on set. Production Management should ensure that there is enough time allotted for stunt training.

All aerial lifts, telehandlers, forklifts and cranes used to execute a stunt shall only be utilized by qualified, trained individuals.

## **Planning the Stunt Sequence**

When planning a stunt sequence, the Stunt Coordinator will need to assess the risks and plan accordingly. The Stunt Coordinator should consider items such as location, cast & crew placement, camera placement, anticipated weather, any mitigating circumstances, etc.

When planning, also take into consideration factors including, but not be limited to, human error, mechanical failure, and outside interference.

## **Equipment**

A qualified person shall ensure that equipment suitable for the performance has been chosen and inspected before performing the stunt and shall re-inspect this equipment after any impact or stress loads prior to performing the stunt again.

Equipment provided by Production Management (e.g., automobiles, cycles, wagons, airbags, rachets) shall be in suitable repair for the safe and proper performance of the stunt.

Persons involved in the planning and execution of a stunt should be entitled to inspect any vehicle, mechanical device, and/or equipment prior to its use, provided it is available. Stunt personnel should be allowed adequate time to inspect the set/location, the equipment, wardrobe, personal safety equipment, and props. Such persons should have a reasonable amount of time for such inspections.

## Stunt Rigging

The rigging of stunts shall be done by qualified individuals. This qualification may come through training, industry experience, or a combination of items.

Equipment used (e.g., ropes, lines, cables, harnesses, hardware) should be designed to support the weight of the Performer comfortably and to bear live loads. The equipment should be manufactured for that purpose or be of an equivalent standard.

All equipment used for rigging must be inspected to check for wear, damage, and integrity prior to use. The Stunt Coordinator should approve the use of all rigging equipment. Any equipment found to be defective shall be removed from service.

Fall protection may be required when rigging at heights.

When rigging to structures, buildings, sound stages, and/or equipment, the use of a structural engineer may be necessary.

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Appropriate personal protective equipment and/or other safety equipment must be provided to the cast & crew as needed. The Stunt Coordinator should consult with the Performer to decide what PPE is necessary for the planned activities. The Stunt Coordinator will have the authority to determine what PPE is worn. The Stunt Coordinator will review the PPE with Production Management and/or the designated representative to ensure studio requirements are followed. No one in Production Management should pressure the Performer or the Stunt Coordinator to scale back the use of protective equipment.

## Wardrobe

Wardrobe, prosthetics, wigs, lenses, and/or other related equipment required to be worn by the stunt individuals should be presented in sufficient time for evaluation and to determine if such items will impact the execution of the stunt. Final safety approval rests with the Stunt Coordinator and should be confirmed by the Performer.

## Safety Meetings

An on-site safety meeting should be held by the First Assistant Director and include the Stunt Coordinator and all Performers and crew in proximity to the sequence. This meeting is to precede the performance of all stunts and should include a "walk-through" or "dry-run" of the stunt sequence(s). Discussion should include the hazards involved, measures to reduce hazards, emergency procedures, and the location of emergency medical facilities.

The Stunt Coordinator should plan and explain acceptable avenues of escape/safety buffer(s) to personnel involved in the event, and an understanding of the intended action, possible deviations, and authority to abort should be made clear.

The Stunt Coordinator, Assistant Director, and/or Production Management should verify that the Performer is comfortable moving forward prior to the stunt being executed. Any doubts or concerns must be addressed and corrected to ensure that the Performer(s) safety concerns are mitigated prior to engaging.

This safety meeting should discuss the following topics:

- Shot sequence and planned stunt work.
- If possible, a slow-speed rehearsal should take place so that everyone can see the movement and path of the Performer(s).
- Environmental conditions (e.g., weather, track conditions for vehicle stunts, flammable foliage for special effects with explosives or open flame).
- Possible changes to the original plan due to hazards.
- Authority to abort, including signals, to be used.
- Production equipment (e.g., aerial lift, vehicles, pyrotechnics) selection, potential hazards, and placement.
- Communication system(s), including designated radio channel.
- Signaling system to alert personnel to the start of the stunt actions.
- Visibility and lighting.
- Scene action (e.g., stunts, performance, and special effects).
- Personal protective equipment (e.g., harnesses, body pads, fire gear).
- Designated safe areas
- Emergency plan (e.g., escape procedures and contingency plan).

Before rolling cameras, should any substantive change become necessary, the First Assistant Director will call all persons involved in the stunt to another safety meeting to discuss said change(s).

## **Rehearsal**

Allow enough time for all necessary rehearsals prior to filming. Each Performer should be informed of the applicable filming activity so that they can be prepared for the respective stunt sequence. The Performer should be wearing the appropriate PPE for all rehearsals. The rehearsal should include any costuming (including long dresses or wigs) that may impact the safe performance of the stunt.

The Stunt Coordinator, Performer, and other directly involved departments may request rehearsal at half speed to ensure they have the timing and marks needed for the stunt sequence. Additional rehearsals may be necessary when adjustments have been made to the timing and marks.

## Immediately Before and During the Stunt Sequence

Personnel qualified to administer emergency medical assistance shall be present or readily available at all rehearsals and all stunt performances. The production should consider engaging an ambulance if emergency transportation to the nearest hospital is required.

The risk of the stunt sequence should be evaluated, and appropriate arrangements should be made. Such considerations should include:

- Distance to a nearby hospital.
- Advanced medical personnel relative to the potential risk(s).
- Communications with medical personnel (e.g., radio, mobile, satellite (SAT) phone).
- Protocols for medical helicopter landing zone, if necessary.

Access to areas where stunt sequences are planned should be limited to authorized personnel only. All other personnel shall remain at a designated safe distance. If needed to prevent unintentional entry into the potentially hazardous areas, warning signs should be posted and/or other appropriate precautions taken.

## After Stunt Sequence

Once the stunt sequence has been completed, unauthorized personnel should remain outside of the potentially hazardous area until an "all clear" announcement is heard. Some areas of the set may require proper cleanup before it is safe for the entire cast & crew. These areas should remain off-limits until the cleanup is completed.