

INDUSTRY WIDE LABOR-MANAGEMENT SAFETY COMMITTEE

SAFETY BULLETIN #4

STUNTS

“ADDENDUM A” – SPECIALIZED ACTIVITIES

This Addendum is designed to help reduce the risk of specialized stunt activities through increased awareness and improved preparedness by Production Management, the Stunt Coordinator (including Assistant Stunt Coordinator, and/or qualified individual), and the applicable cast & crew. Production Management should be working closely with the Stunt Coordinator, and production workers overseeing specialized activities (armorers, animal handlers, etc.), leading up to the day of the stunt sequence. Communications to cast & crew, such as announcements in call sheets, should be done the day before and the day of the shoot.

In addition to referring to this addendum and Safety Bulletin #04 - Stunts, please refer to the safety bulletins listed under each subheading below (listed alphabetically).

For all activities mentioned below, check what specific licenses or permits are required by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (“AHJ”) at the applicable local, state, federal, and/or international level. The use of firearms, pyrotechnics, aircraft, boats, trains or cars often require special permits and/or operator certifications. A notification to the applicable regulatory agency may be necessary for certain pyrotechnic stunts.

Animals

Follow safety guidelines in Safety Bulletin #06, *Animal Handling Rules for the Motion Picture Industry*, and Safety Bulletin #12, *Guidelines for the Use of Venomous Reptiles* when there are stunts involving animals.

No individual should be required to work with an animal in a stunt sequence that a reasonable person would regard as potentially dangerous unless a qualified animal handler or trainer is present to consult with and mitigate the risk(s).

Performers, and other cast & crew, expected to perform stunt work with or around animals should be able to address any concerns they might have prior to activity. In certain situations, it is recommended that anyone working with or in close proximity with animals is acclimated in rehearsals.

General guidelines when working with animals for the purpose of a stunt sequence:

- An animal should never be abused, endangered, injured, or deliberately killed for a production.
- Guard against animal stress, harm, or fatigue.

- Animals must only be trained, handled, and managed by qualified people such as an Animal Handler.
- Experienced Animal Handlers must be engaged for stunt scenes involving an animal performance.
- Map out and rehearse filmed sequences in pre-production.
- The welfare of animals always has priority over continuing production.
- Prior to filming, provide applicable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and check for allergies and phobias.

Driving Stunts

For driving stunts, as applicable, refer to Safety Bulletin #37 - Vehicle Restraint Systems - Seat Belts & Harnesses, Safety Bulletin #42 - Guidelines for Alternative Driving Systems and Safety Bulletin and Safety Bulletin #43 - Recommended Guidelines for Free Driving. When performing driving stunts with motorcycles, refer to Safety Bulletin #20 – Guidelines for Use of Motorcycles.

When required, traffic control procedures shall be reviewed, and special attention should be paid to driving sequences where unauthorized personnel could enter the area.

When any driving sequence requires special expertise to perform the driving stunt, the driver should be qualified to perform the stunt. Here are other conditions that require a qualified stunt driver:

- When any or all wheels will leave the driving surface.
- When tire traction will be broken, i.e., skids, slides, etc.
- When the driver's vision will be impaired by:
 - Dust.
 - Spray (when driving through water, mud, etc.).
 - Blinding lights.
 - Restrictive covering over the windshield.
 - Smoke.
 - Theatrical fog/haze.
 - Any other condition that may restrict the driver's vision.
- When the speed of the vehicle will be greater than normally safe for the conditions of the vehicle, driving surface.
- When there are road hazards--such as obstacles or rough terrain.
- When any aircraft, fixed wing, or helicopter is flown in close proximity to the vehicle creating a potentially hazardous driving condition.
- Whenever high speed or close proximity of two or more vehicles create conditions that may be dangerous to the drivers, passengers, film crew, or vehicles.

Vehicle Stunt Control Measures

- Procedures to ensure the vehicle(s) is/are fit for purpose, roadworthy, and suitably maintained.
- The Stunt Coordinator, Assistant Director, or person with delegated responsibility should ensure that adequate communications are established before any driving takes place.
- Ensure that vehicle occupants are properly restrained.
- Where possible, mitigate production-related distractions to other road users.
- Stunts from vehicles should be fully rehearsed and shot under controlled conditions. All traffic should be held, and the road closed for the duration of the action.
- Consider, in pre-production, whether padding should be inserted in the Performer's clothing in consultation with the Stunt Coordinator.
- Vehicles flips, including cannon rolls, should be thoroughly planned with engineering calculations, carefully reviewed track construction, plans to abort and designated safety area(s). Pneumatic, ratchet, and winch devices may be required for these vehicle stunts and should be installed and operated by personnel trained and qualified to do so. Requisite safety meetings, inspections and announcements must be performed ahead of the vehicle stunt sequence. The stunt driver must be vetted for qualifications and have the support of the Stunt Coordinator that they have the skills necessary to perform the stunt. Emergency personnel should be at the location on the day of the vehicle stunt sequence.

Falls

A freefall is a fall from one level to another without a tether or guided into an airbag or box. For guidance on the safe use of stunt-related systems into which Performers freefall, please see Safety Bulletin #18 – Guidelines for the Safe Use of Stunt Air Bags or Other Freefall Catch Systems.

Pratfalls/Footfalls

A pratfall, sometimes known as a footfall, is a stunt in which the Performer falls from at or near ground level without manipulation from a device.

Performers should be given the option of having stunt doubles to perform their footfalls/pratfalls. Here are some considerations for Performers doing stunt footfalls/pratfalls:

- Age and physical ability of the Performer including pre-existing medical conditions/prior injuries.
- Location of the action.
- Design of the shots.
- Number of takes.

Suitable mats when falling onto concrete or other hard surfaces should be provided during rehearsal and where possible, during filming. Consideration should be given to the wearing of padding, including elbow and knee pads, and, if necessary, incorporated into costumes.

High Falls

High falls are performed at elevated positions above standing height, using appropriate devices to control descent to a safe stop.

When performing a high fall, the Stunt Coordinator should ensure the equipment is appropriate for the circumstances, inspected, tested and maintained in a serviceable condition, and operated by qualified individuals.

Firearms

For all stunts involving firearms, follow safety guidelines in Safety Bulletin #01 *Recommendations For The Use Of Firearms, Blanks, And Dummy Rounds*. Live ammunition should never be on a production unless permitted under the rare circumstances articulated in Safety Bulletin #02, *Prohibitions And Special Restrictions On The Use Of Live Ammunition*.

Special Effects

For stunts involving Special Effects (a.k.a. SPFX), please refer to Safety Bulletin #16 - *Recommended Guidelines for Safety with Pyrotechnic Special Effects*.

All the activities involved in the designing, formulating, setting up, initiating, triggering, carrying out, and/or altering of a special effect should be supervised by a qualified and experienced Special Effects Coordinator in communication with the Stunt Coordinator. The Special Effects Coordinator must possess all applicable licenses.

Arrangements for appropriate medical personnel and equipment should be made before the stunt/special effect(s) is rehearsed and performed.

The Special Effects Coordinator, in conjunction with the Stunt Coordinator, will communicate to cast & crew about the special effects sequence, details of safe areas, and fail safes.

If a Performer is rigged with any type of explosive device (including squibs), the Performer must be permitted to consult with the Stunt Coordinator and a qualified, licensed special effects technician.