

Choose Your Rope & Harness Training Program Carefully

Ask the CEO of any Major Insurance Carrier or IA provider company and you will learn that crippling injuries and fatality falls from modern roof structures are a credible threat to Property Claims Adjusters. In proof of this fact many Insurance Carriers have outsourced their high risk roof claims to Ladder Assist type organizations and at least a dozen or more “Rope and Harness” training vendors have sprung up to capitalize on the situation.



WARNING: Most “Rope and Harness” training programs are based on a “Sport Climbing” model and have NO connection with modern Fall Protection as it is spelled out in OSHA regulations 1926.5 OR ANSI Standards Z-359 and NO affiliation with today’s worldwide Professional Rope Access Community.

PLEASE: Take time to educate yourself on the facts before selecting a “Rope and Harness” training program.

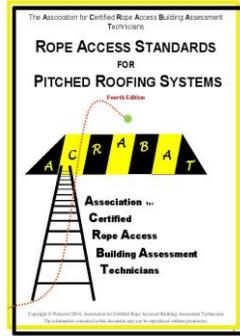
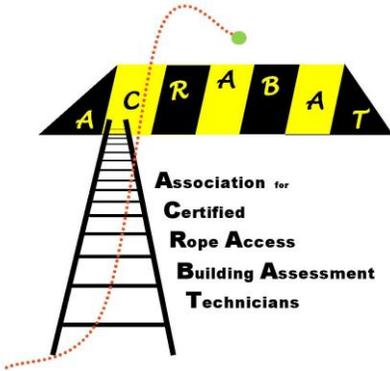
Fact #1 – Sport Climbing and Rope Access are two distinctly different industries with one dedicated to the recreational act of climbing a structure and the other dedicated to climbing a rope for the hands free access of a structure.

To illustrate this point consider Sport Climbers Kevin Jorgenson and Tommy Caldwell who recently completed a 19 day, 3000ft climb up El Capitan in Yosemite National Park. Had this same ascent been completed using Rope Access it would have been completed in a couple of hours with less than one tenth of one percent of the risk of injury that Kevin and Tommy encountered.

Fact #2 – Legitimate Rope Access / Fall Protection Instructors should hold a certification title as “Competent Instructors” from an accredited training program recognized by the worldwide Rope Access and/or Fall Protection training communities. The companies they work for should operate under the direction of an accredited “Qualified Person” and proudly display the exact standards of fall protection to which their program complies with.



Fact #3 – Rope and Harness training vendors are not required to comply with OSHA standards for fall protection with respect to their program attendees because attendees are not considered “employees” of their company. Unscrupulous vendors count on the fact that most Property Adjusters are ignorant of real fall protection facts and therefore have no point of reference to call them on their errors.



ACRABAT (The Assoc. for Certified Rope Access Building Assessment Technicians) is currently the **ONLY** professional organization dedicated to the promotion of ethical access / fall protection training and practice for Property Claims Adjusters that is in full compliance with the worldwide Rope Access & Fall Protection Communities. Their leaders are active and participating members of the SPRAT (*Society for Professional Rope Access Technicians*) committees that develop Rope Access Guidelines for today's "Urban Environment". Their standards for safe practice are available for all to see at www.acrabat.org.

What Can Be Done to Impact Positive Fall Protection Reform for the Property Claims Industry:

- Individual Property Adjusters should educate themselves and others that "Sport Climbing" is not a viable substitute for Rope Access forms of Fall Protection as it is spelled out in ANSI standard Z-359.8 OR as recognized in SPRAT's constitution document "Safe Practices for Rope Access Work" or OSHA regulations for Fall Protection 1926.5 or ACRABAT's constitutional document "Rope Access Standards for Pitched Roofing Systems" or any other credible document published on the subject of "fall protection" in a work setting.

- Do Not accept or take part in any form of Fall Protection training program that does not proudly display their training credentials or compliance to ANSI/ OSHA work setting approved process. Let the Sport Climbing training companies dry up and blow away from lack of patronage. Sport Climbing Based Rope and Harness training vendors are easy to spot because they do not use full body harnesses, helmets or rope climbing gear rated by the manufacturer for hands free use (e.g. ATCs, Fig 8s or Grigris).



- Property Claims and Ladder Assist Employers wield great power with respect for their conditions for worker candidates. These employers should educate themselves on the facts of real Fall Protection training and insist on compliance as a condition of employment.