



Work Safety Alert Fall through a Floor Opening

1. **Date of Accident :** January 2019
2. **Place of Accident :** A building site
3. **Summary :**

A worker while clearing debris on 3/F of a building under construction fell for about 13 metres to 1/F through a floor opening and passed away on the same day.

4. **Work Safety Alert for Contractors/ Employers :**

To prevent any workers/ employees from falling from height, contractors/ employers engaged in any work at or near dangerous places with floor openings or void spaces should:

- appoint a competent person to conduct task-specific risk assessments to identify all potential hazards associated with the work, taking into account the nature of work and the work environment, particularly where there are dangerous places from which workers/ employees are liable to fall;
- formulate safe work methods and procedures for the work with due regard to the results of risk assessments to minimize the risks exposed to the workers/ employees, such as falling hazard;
- safeguard all unprotected floor openings or void spaces over or through which persons are liable to fall by suitable guard-rails or coverings;
- ensure that the height of a guard-rail above the surface of the floor openings or void spaces is not less than 900mm and not more than 1150mm for a top guard-rail and not less than 450mm and not more than 600mm for an intermediate guard-rail; and that the height of a toe-board or other similar barrier is not less than 200mm;



- ensure that every covering provided for an opening or a void space is so constructed as to prevent the fall of persons, materials and articles; and clearly and boldly marked as to show its purpose or securely fixed in position;
- where the provision of guard-rails or coverings to prevent fall from height through openings or void spaces is impracticable and working at such dangerous places cannot be avoided, set up an effective fall arresting system by providing every worker/ employee concerned with, and ensure the worker's/ employee's proper use of, a suitable safety harness with the lanyard continuously attached to a suitable anchorage throughout the work;
- provide each worker/ employee involved in the work with a suitable safety helmet equipped with a chin strap and ensure the proper wearing of the same by the worker/ employee throughout the work;
- ensure that every place of work is adequately and suitably lit to the extent necessary to secure that worker's/ employee's safety;
- provide all workers/ employees involved with necessary safety information, instruction and training, and ensure that they are familiar with the safe work procedures and relevant safety measures; and
- establish and implement an effective monitoring and control system to ensure that all safety measures are strictly followed.

5. Reference :

- [Safe Systems of Work](#)¹
- [Five Steps to Risk Assessment](#)¹
- [A Guide to the Provisions for Safe Places of Work under Part VA of the Construction Sites \(Safety\) Regulations](#)¹

¹ Click to view document



- [Guidance Notes on Classification and Use of Safety Belts and their Anchorage System](#)¹
- [A Casebook of Fatal Accidents related to Work-at-height](#)¹
- [Lighting Assessment in the Workplace](#)¹

DISCLAIMER

This Work Safety Alert (“the Alert”) is issued at the earliest possible opportunity after a serious accident with a view to drawing the attention of interested parties to the general safety precautionary measures necessary to protect people engaging in similar work activities. The material contained in the Alert constitutes general guidance only. It does not reduce, limit, or replace, any legal obligations upon any person to comply with any statutory duties under relevant legislation. Users such as Managers and Supervisors should make their own evaluation of the information contained in the Alert to determine if it can be applied to their own situations and practices. The Labour Department does NOT accept any responsibilities for any loss or damage resulting from the use of or failure to use of the information on the Alert.

Note: The material contained in the Alert is not exhaustive, and will be supplemented/adjusted where necessary if more relevant information comes to light.