



Work Safety Alert

Falling from a Metal Scaffold

1. **Date of Accident** : September 2017
2. **Place of Accident** : Outside an industrial building
3. **Summary** :

A worker while carrying out air-conditioning work on a metal scaffold erected on the pavement outside an industrial building fell about 3.5 metres to the ground. He sustained serious head injury and passed away on the same day.

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

To prevent any workers/ employees from falling from height while work above ground, the contractors/ employers should:

- appoint a competent person to conduct task-specific risk assessments to identify all associated potential hazards, taking into account the nature of work and the work environment, particularly those related to work-above-ground;
- formulate safe work methods and procedures for the work with due regard to the results of the risk assessments, which should comply with the requirements of safety legislation and relevant codes of practice;
- provide and maintain suitable and adequate safe means of access to and egress from every place of work;
- provide and ensure the proper use of scaffolds, suitable working platforms or elevating work platforms, where appropriate;



- ensure that every working platform is provided with suitable guard-rails and toe-boards and that the height of a guard-rail above the surface of the working platform 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 erected on the platform is not less than 200mm;
- ensure that every working platform is closely boarded or planked; and every board or plank rests securely and evenly on its supports;
- where free-standing metal scaffold is put to use, ensure that the scaffold is vertical and built on firm foundation;
- ensure that every working platform (scaffold) is inspected and certified safe by a competent person before taken into use for the first time, and at regular intervals not exceeding 14 days;
- provide each worker/ employee involved in the work with a suitable safety helmet equipped with a Y-type chin strap and ensure the proper wearing of the same by the worker/ employee throughout the work;
- provide all workers/ employees concerned with the necessary safety information, instruction and training, and ensure that they are familiar with the safe work procedures and safety measures; and
- establish and implement an effective monitoring and control system to ensure all safety measures are strictly followed.

5. Reference :

- [Safe Systems of Work](#)¹
- [Five Steps to Risk Assessment](#)¹
- [Five Steps to Information, Instruction and Training](#)¹
- [Code of Practice for Metal Scaffolding Safety](#)¹

¹ Click to view document



- [A Guide to the Provisions for Safe Places of Work under Part VA of the Construction Sites \(Safety\) Regulations¹](#)
- [A Casebook of Fatal Accidents related to Work-at-height¹](#)

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.

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