



Work Safety Alert

Trapped inside a Lift Shaft

1. Date of Accident : November 2017

2. Place of Accident : A building site

3. Summary :

A worker while conducting lift work in a common lift shaft of a building under construction was trapped between the counterweight of a lift and an I-beam structure. He sustained serious leg injury and passed away on the following day.

4. Work Safety Alert for Contractors/Employers :

To ensure the safety of workers/ employees engaged in any work inside a lift shaft, the contractors/ employers should provide and maintain a safe system of work which should include, but not limited to, the following:

- appointing 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 to be carried out and the working environment particularly inside a common lift shaft which accommodates lifts without proper segregation;
- formulating safe work methods and procedures for the lift work with due regard to the results of risk assessments and the relevant codes of practice, industry guidelines, recognized safety standards and lift manufacturer's specifications/ instructions;



- implementing a permit-to-work system to ensure that all hazards associated with the lift work to be performed inside the lift shaft have been eliminated before allowing any worker/ employee to enter the lift shaft for work. Among others, the following safety precautions specifically against the hazard of being trapped or struck by any moving parts of adjacent lifts including the counterweights of the lifts in a common lift shaft should be adopted:
 - a partition of appropriate height should be provided where practicable between adjacent lifts to prevent trapping hazards and safeguard workers from coming into contact with any moving parts of adjacent lifts;
 - the lifts adjacent to the lift where work is performed should be suspended if the provision of partition is not practicable;
 - if the service of the adjacent lifts has to be maintained to provide minimum service to particular lift floor zone, that adjacent lift should not be allowed to move to the floor zone of the lift where work is performed;
- ensuring that the lift work is well-planned and coordinated to avoid incompatible activities being performed at the same time;
- ensuring that the lift work is conducted safely under the immediate supervision of a person who is competent by virtue of his substantial training and practical experience in relation to the relevant work;
- ensuring that only competent workers/ employees possessing adequate knowledge, skills and experience are employed to carry out the lift work;
- providing all workers/ employees, supervisors and related personnel involved in the lift work with necessary safety information, instruction and training;
- ensuring that workers/ employees, supervisors and related personnel involved in the lift work are familiar with the safe work procedures and safety measures, and fully understand their roles and responsibilities; and



- establishing and implementing an effective monitoring and control system to ensure strict and full compliance with all the above safety measures.

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 Safety at Work \(Lift and Escalator\)](#)¹
- [A Casebook of Fatal Accidents in Lift Installation, Maintenance and Repairing Work](#)¹
- [Guidelines on Safety of Lift Shaft Works : Volume 3 - Throughout the Occupation Stage of Building by the Construction Industry Council](#)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.

¹ Click to view document