



## Work Safety Alert Fall from Height while Climbing Down a Metal Scaffold

1. **Date of Accident :** January 2017
2. **Place of Accident :** A shop unit under renovation
3. **Summary :**

A worker engaged in dismantling of air-conditioning conduit near the ceiling of a shop unit fell about 3m to the ground while climbing down from the top of a metal scaffold. He sustained serious head injuries and passed away on the same day.

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

To prevent any workers/ employees undertaking internal fitting and fixture dismantling work from falling from height, the contractors/ employers concerned should:

- appoint a competent person to conduct task-specific risk assessments in identifying all potential hazards that are associated with the dismantling work processes to be undertaken, taking into account the working environment, particularly those processes that involve work-above-ground;
- formulate safe work methods and procedures for the dismantling work, taking into consideration of the risk assessment results;
- 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 suitable working platforms or elevating work platforms, where appropriate, for the dismantling work required to be carried out at height;
- 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 support;
- ensure that every working platform (scaffold) is inspected and certified safe by a competent person before first use and at regular intervals not exceeding 14 days;
- where the provision of working platform is not reasonably practicable for work-above-ground, set up a fall arresting system by providing every worker/ employee who works above ground with a suitable safety harness which should be continuously attached to a suitable and secure anchorage system throughout the work;
- take all necessary steps to ensure the proper use of a fall arresting system by the worker/ employee concerned if the provision of a suitable working platform for working above ground is not reasonably practicable;
- provide each worker/ employee employed at the workplace with a suitable safety helmet with a chin strap and take all reasonable steps to ensure the proper wearing of the same by the worker/ employee;
- 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 for the dismantling work; and



- establish and implement an effective monitoring and control system to ensure all safety measures are strictly followed.

## 5. Reference :

- [A Guide to the Provisions for Safe Places of Work under Part VA of the Construction Sites \(Safety\) Regulations<sup>1</sup>](#)
- [Code of Practice for Metal Scaffolding Safety<sup>1</sup>](#)
- [Guidance Notes on Safe Use of Power-operated Elevating Work Platforms<sup>1</sup>](#)
- [Guidance Notes on Classification and Use of Safety Belts and their Anchorage Systems<sup>1</sup>](#)
- [A Casebook of Fatal Accidents Related to Work-at-Height<sup>1</sup>](#)

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### **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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