



Work Safety Alert **Fall from the rooftop of a building**

1. **Date of Accident :** December 2020
2. **Place of Accident :** A residential building under renovation
3. **Summary :**

A worker while collecting bags of concrete debris from an unfenced canopy beyond the parapet wall on the roof of a 5-storey building, plunged to death onto the 1/F canopy through the void spaces of a bamboo scaffold erected at the external wall of the building.

4. Work Safety Alert for Contractors/ Employers :

To prevent any workers/ employees engaged in any work at or near dangerous places with unprotected edges, openings or void spaces from falling from height, contractors/ employers 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 those dangerous places where workers/ employees will work and are liable to fall;
- formulate safe work methods and procedures for the work with due regard to the results of risk assessments, and following the requirements of safety legislation and guidelines to minimise the risks exposed to the workers/ employees, such as falling hazard;
- provide and properly maintain suitable and adequate safe means of access to and egress from every place of work;
- ensure that all unprotected edges, openings or void spaces, through



which any person is liable to fall a distance of 2 metres or more, are properly fenced off or covered;

- where the provision of bamboo scaffold is required, among others,
 - ensure that suitable working platforms are provided at positions where work at height on the scaffold are required;
 - ensure that every working platform is closely boarded or planked; and every board or plank rests securely and evenly on its supports;
 - ensure that every working platform of the bamboo scaffold 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; otherwise, the platform is protected by not less than two horizontal bamboo members of the scaffold spaced at intervals between 750mm to 900mm; that the height of a toe-board or other similar barrier erected on the platform is not less than 200mm;
 - ensure that the scaffold is inspected and certified safe by a competent person before being taken into use for the first time and at regular intervals not exceeding 14 days;
- where provision of working platforms or protection of dangerous edges, openings or void spaces are not reasonably practicable, set up a fall arresting system by providing every worker/ employee concerned with a suitable safety harness and ensure that the harness the worker wears is continuously attached to a suitable anchorage system from a safe place and throughout the work, and take necessary steps to ensure that every worker/ employee concerned is properly using the fall arresting system;
- 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;



- 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 that all safety measures are strictly followed.

5. Reference :

- [Safe Systems of Work¹](#)
- [Five Steps to Risk Assessment¹](#)
- [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](#)
- [Overview of Work-at-Height Safety¹](#)
- [Guidance Notes on Classification and Use of Safety Belts and their Anchorage System¹](#)

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