



Work Safety Alert Fall from Working Platform Erected at External Wall

1. **Date of Accident :** March 2017
2. **Place of Accident :** A village house under renovation
3. **Summary :**

A man while undertaking renovation works was suspected to have fallen about 5 metres from a working platform at the external wall of a 2-storey village house to the ground and sustained fatal injury.

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

To prevent any workers/ employees from falling from height while undertaking renovation works at external walls, 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 where work-above-ground is involved;
- formulate safe work methods and procedures for the works, taking into consideration the results of the risk assessments and following the requirements of relevant codes of practice and guidelines;
- 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 a suitable scaffold such as double-row bamboo scaffold or tubular scaffold with working platforms for work that cannot be safely done on or from the ground or from part of a permanent structure;



- ensure that the ground or structure on which a scaffold is constructed should be solid, levelled and rammed to give a hard surface, and should be strong enough to keep the scaffold upright. The stability of the ground or supporting structure should be justified by recognized engineering principles;
- ensure that every 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;
- ensure that every working platform is closely boarded or planked; and that every board or plank is of sound construction, adequate strength and free from patent defect and rests securely and evenly on its support;
- in case of a tubular scaffold, 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; or in case of a bamboo scaffold, ensure that every working platform is protected by not less than two horizontal bamboo members of the scaffold spaced at intervals between 750mm to 900mm; and that the height of a toe-board or other similar barrier erected on the platform is not less than 200mm;
- where the provision of working platform is not reasonably practicable, set up a fall arresting system by providing every worker/ employee with a suitable safety harness which should be continuously attached to a suitable and secure anchorage point, an independent lifeline or a fall arresting system from a safe place throughout the work; and take all necessary steps to ensure that the fall arresting system is properly used by every worker/ employee concerned;
- provide each worker/ employee involved with a suitable safety helmet 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 all safety measures are strictly followed.

5. Reference :

- [Safe Systems of Work¹](#)
- [A Guide to the Provisions for Safe Places of Work under Part VA of the Construction Sites \(Safety\) Regulations¹](#)
- [Code of Practice for Bamboo Scaffolding Safety¹](#)
- [Code of Practice for Metal Scaffolding Safety¹](#)
- [Guidance Notes on Classification and Use of Safety Belts and their Anchorage Systems¹](#)
- [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.

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

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