

Work at height

Falls from height are the most common cause of workplace fatality.

In 2013/14 there were 39 fatalities – 19 of them in the UK Construction Industry.



A recent fall from height at 30 feet resulted in multiple injuries including head, spinal and chest injuries which were not survivable.

Before working at height make sure:

- Work is properly planned and organised and you have suitable access equipment
- Fragile materials and rooflights on roofs have been identified and precautions are taken
- That adequate guardrails, barriers or any other means of protection are provided
- Work platforms are capable of supporting people, their work equipment and materials
- Where access ladders rise above 9m, a safe intermediate platform is provided
- Ladders are rested at the correct angle (1 unit out for 4 units up), extend at least 1m above the stepping-off point and are secured, top and bottom.



When working at height

- Ensure that any working platform is safe and secure whether static or mobile. Mobile platforms must have out-riggers to improve their stability
- Fit handrails, toe boards etc, sufficiently wide to walk on without the risk of tumbling or losing balance
- Use safety harnesses, fall-arrest devices or safety nets to prevent falls
- Supply and use anchorage points for safety harnesses and ladders
- Anticipate adverse weather conditions

- Scrape mud off boots before climbing ladders
- Do not over-reach on ladders and platforms
- Do not allow rubbish to accumulate. Use a chute or lower materials properly.

Safe working practices include:

- Using only trained and competent personnel
- Risk assessment and the selection of appropriate equipment
- The provision of crawling boards or ladders where the roof is fragile and liable to collapse under a person's weight or the roof has a pitch above 10 degrees
- Preventing unauthorised access to roofs, roof-spaces, chimney stacks, etc
- Only using ladders for light work of short duration, where a secure handhold can be maintained there is no safer alternative and the ladder is properly secured
- Regularly inspecting and maintaining all access equipment prior to use and after adverse conditions – Scaffold tags on scaffolds and other work at height equipment
- Ensuring that inspections of scaffolding are undertaken before use, every week, and after events such as storms or vehicle impacts, by a competent person – Scaffold tag it or use a record sheet. This may require a competent inspector that has been on a CISRS course.
- Having a clear rescue plan for rescuing those who fall but are left suspended by fall arrest equipment – being suspended for only a short duration can be fatal.



Legislation and resources

- The Work at Height Regulations 2005 (as amended) apply to all work at height where there is a risk of a fall liable to cause personal injury. They place duties on employers, the self-employed, and any person that controls the work of others (for example facilities managers or building owners who may contact others to work at height) They also have special provisions and requirements for those who work at

height providing instruction or leadership to one or more people engaged in caving or climbing by way of sport,

- INDG 401: The Work at Height Regulations 2005 (as amended)
- INDG 402: Safe Use of Ladders and Stepladders
- INDG 405: Top Tips for Ladder and Stepladder Safety.

All the above guidance and information is available as free down loads from the HSE web page

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg401.pdf>

The logo consists of a stylized, abstract graphic above the text. The graphic is composed of several overlapping, curved, teardrop-like shapes in shades of light blue and cyan, creating a sense of motion or a stylized 'S' or 'T' shape.

Trinity
Safety