
CONSTRUCTION INFONET - ISSUE 01.06

NEWS AND INITIATIVES

Construction industry Good Order Campaign is about to start

A *Good Order Campaign* throughout the construction industry starts on 1st February 2006. HSE Construction Division Inspectors will carry out targeted inspections looking at good order issues on construction sites and how effectively these are being managed.

This campaign is part of an HSE all industry initiative to reduce injuries caused by slips and trips. The HSE website now contains full details of the [Good Order Campaign](#) including a short 5min video of practical steps that can be taken to minimise the risk.

Slips and trips are regularly the biggest single cause of reported injuries in the construction industry. In addition to several thousand over-3-day accidents, slips and trips cause over 1,000 major injuries on UK sites each year.

Custodial sentence for construction company owner after fall from lift truck platform

The owner of a building company has been found guilty of the manslaughter of an employee who died after falling 8m from a "home-made" working platform on the forks of a telehandler. He was sentenced to an 18-month custodial sentence. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) instigated the prosecution following a joint investigation by HSE and the Police. [See Press Release](#).

Fork lift trucks used as a working platform

Forklift trucks can be used with working platforms to allow people to work at height. HSE has re-published [Guidance Note PM28 \(3rd edition\)](#) which provides advice on identifying appropriate working platform and forklift truck combinations, how they can be used safely together and necessary design characteristics for working platforms to provide for their safe use.

Recent fatal injuries

Fatal injuries that have occurred in recent weeks include:

- Fall from ladder whilst replacing a roof slate;
- Fall from ladder on two-story commercial building during repair of guttering;
- Fall 8m from recently constructed dormer on domestic property;
- Fall from tower scaffold whilst installing insulating panels in shopping centre;
- Fall 7m through roof light during roof light replacement work;
- Fall from trailer whilst unloading kerbstones;
- Struck by vehicle whilst testing recently installed street lights on traffic island;
- Struck by vehicle during removal of traffic management.

Some observations arising from these fatal injuries are:

- *Ladders* and *working platforms* require constant vigilance when used to work at height;
- *Fragile roof lights* continue to claim lives. Four workers have died this way since April 2005.
- *Low falls* can also result in fatal injuries
- *Work in or near live carriageways* is increasingly contributing to fatal injuries

Some recent court cases

[Case 1](#) - A housing developer was fined £8,000 with £3,833 costs after a contractor employed to fit windows fell 6m.

[Case 2](#) - A construction company was fined £14,000 plus costs of £6,000 after a worker was seriously injured in a 5m fall through a mezzanine floor he was helping to build.

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[Case 3](#) - Failure to train a contractor how to use a loader shovel resulted in a £35,000 fine after the parked vehicle rolled backwards injuring two young boys and the driver who tried to halt the vehicle.

Useful information from the Major Contractors Group (MCG) website

The MCG was established in 1996 to represent the interests of the largest contractors in the UK. There are currently 15 members and their website [Health and Safety Page](#) contains links to useful free information on health and safety issues. This includes:

- prequalification guidelines for sub contractors;
- best practice exchange of [lessons learnt](#) to establish the root cause of incidents;
- the MCG health and safety newsletter;
- self-assessment forms for those at risk from HAVs, dermatitis, MSDs and NIHL;
- occupational health toolbox talks to improve understanding of health risks.

Alternative penalties to fines

Prosecution is the main means by which HSE holds to account those alleged to have committed serious breaches of health and safety law. Conviction usually results in a fine. HSE is considering what the impact would be of introducing alternative penalties for health and safety offences.

A snapshot of the alternative sanctions that have been mentioned in the health and safety context, together with some suggested issues for discussion, can be found at [Alternative Sanctions](#). This list is not exhaustive and your views on these or any other penalties can be emailed to enforcement.policy@hse.gsi.gov.uk

Worker involvement and consultation

The [HSE Construction website pages](#) now contain a section dealing with worker involvement and consultation where it states that “there is a growing body of evidence that that effective worker involvement and consultation on health and safety has a positive impact on both individual workers and organisations as a whole”.

You can use an online [worker engagement decision tool](#) which describes the range of ways in which workers participate in developing and maintaining health and safety arrangements on a construction site. This tool will you identify whether your arrangements meet minimum legal requirements, and what improvements can be made.

A series of case studies on worker engagement is being developed. Examples, which show the business benefits can be found on the HSE website at [worker engagement case studies](#)

I hope you find this information helpful.

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