



Labour Department (Headquarters)

勞工處 (總處)

Your reference 來函編號 :

Our reference 本處檔案編號 : (99) in LD OD/1-55/77 Pt. 3

Tel. Number 電話號碼 : 2852 4176

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20 June 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

Safe Use of Suspended Working Platform

The Labour Department (“LD”) is highly concerned about the fatal work accident that happened on 13 June 2022 which is suspected to have caused by the failure of a trolley mounted on a structural I-beam for supporting a temporary suspended working platform (“SWP”). The two workers fell together with the SWP to the ground and certified dead on spot. In this connection, we write to remind you that necessary safety measures, in particular the following key measures, should be taken immediately with a view to preventing recurrence of the similar accident.

2. In accordance with regulation 6(c) of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Suspended Working Platforms) Regulation (“SWPR”), it stipulated that **the owner of a SWP shall ensure that it is not used for carrying persons unless the wire ropes or chains are securely attached to the outriggers or other supports. As such, the wire ropes attached to only the trolley could not fulfill the said statutory requirement, hence, the use of I-beams with trolleys or similar designs to suspend temporary SWPs are strictly prohibited.**

3. Regulation 15(1) of SWPR also stipulated that **the owner of a SWP used for carrying persons shall provide each person using it with a safety belt and an independent lifeline or an anchorage with fittings; and each such safety belt, lifeline, anchorage and fitting shall be properly maintained and shall be of such a design and so constructed as to prevent serious injury in the event of a fall to any person using it.**

4. In the aspect of testing and examination of suspended working platforms, according to paragraph 5.5.1 of the Guidance Notes on the Inspection, Thorough Examination and Testing of Suspended Working Platforms, it stated that **the working platform of a SWP should be positioned as close as possible to the**

ground or landing level during the functional/operational test to avoid causing serious injury to the persons inside the working platform if the SWP failed during the testing and examination period.

5. There are other statutory requirements as well as other requirements as stipulated in the said regulation i.e. the SWPR, the Code of Practice for Safe Operation of Suspended Working Platforms and the Guidance Notes on the Inspection, Thorough Examination and Testing of Suspended Working Platform. You may refer to them in order to protect against the persons working with/on a SWP.

6. The LD published the following documents which covered the safety requirements on the use and operation of the SWP as well as the related supporting activities such as inspection, test and thorough examination of SWPs.

- “Code of Practice for Safe Use and Operation of Suspended Working Platforms” to provide guidance to the owner of a SWP for compliance with the requirements under the provisions of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Suspended Working Platforms) Regulation. The CoP can be downloaded from the LD’s website at <http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/os/B/platform.pdf>.
- “Guidance Notes on the Inspection, Thorough Examination and Testing of Suspended Working Platforms” to provide practical guidance on the inspection, thorough examination and testing of SWPs. The GN can be downloaded from the LD’s website at <https://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/os/C/SWP.pdf>.
- “Guidance Notes on Classification and Use of Safety Belts and their Anchorage System” to provide practical guidance on the use of safety belts and their anchorage system <http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/os/C/belt.pdf>.

7. Under the general duties provisions of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance, Cap. 59, it shall be the duty of every employer and proprietor to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of persons employed by him. Contravention of the provisions is liable to a maximum fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for 6 months.

8. To ensure workers’ safety at work, the owner shall establish, implement and maintain a safe system of work for every operation of a SWP.

9. The LD has stepped up inspection to the workplaces with temporary SWPs installed so as to ensure that all duty holders act in compliance with the safety legislation. We will take vigorous enforcement actions without prior warning, including issuing improvement/suspension notices and initiating

prosecutions as appropriate during inspections, in particular if the use of structural I-beams with trolleys or other similar designs as suspension parts of temporary SWPs are noted.

10. Should you need further information, please contact Mr KEUNG Chi-kong on 2852 4960.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'NG Ho-wang', written over a circular stamp or mark.

(NG Ho-wang)
for Commissioner for Labour