

Safety & Health Circular No. 08/2009

Site Safety Reminder

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In 2008 concerns were raised about the annual outturn of safety performance in the Housing Authority (HA)'s construction sites and a series of tragic accidents. According to the statistics from the Labour Department and the Census and Statistics Department, the accident rate in the HA's New Works contracts in 2008 was 16.1/1000 workers—representing a 35% rise year-on-year as compared to the same period in 2007, though down by 50% based on a five-year snapshot.

The most predominant accident types on New Works sites in 2008 are listed below:

| Accident types | No. of cases |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| (a) Slip, trip or fall on the same level | 26 cases (34%) |
| (b) Striking against or being struck by moving objects | 20 cases (26%) |
| (c) Being injured whilst lifting or | 10 cases (13%) |
| (d) Fall of person from height | 7 cases (9%) |
| (e) Striking against fixed or stationary | 6 cases (8%) |
| (f) Contact with moving machinery or object being machined | 4 cases (5%) |

Injuries and mishaps can be avoided by proper preventative site management and your role in ensuring construction workplace safety is critical. On-site operations must be carefully managed at all levels to ensure the safety of all persons and safe operations at site at all times including, but not limited to, the following measures:

- (a) Strengthening supervision and safety management, especially on high risk operations such as hoisting operations, working at height and demolition;

- (b) Providing proper works planning, carrying out risk assessments, implementing effective hazard controls and formulating safe working methods;
- (c) Strengthening safety awareness and teamwork at all levels;
- (d) Maintaining proper housekeeping to prevent minor injuries; and
- (e) Deploying a safe workforce that is adequately trained, informed and supervised. Conducting regular training and communication of safe working methods with supervisory staff and general workers.