

## Safety & Health Circular No. 11/2009

### Alert on Working at Height

Date: 22 July 2009

Our Ref. : HD(C)TS 4/49/26

Recent accidents involving working at height on construction sites have raised concerns about workplace safety. Your role in ensuring construction workplace safety is critical and operations on site must be properly supervised and carefully managed at all levels to prevent accidents.

Specific 'regulatory' and 'codes of practice' requirements are stipulated with regard to working at height including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Observing Construction Sites (Safety) Regulations, and in particular, Regulations 38 and 40.
2. Planning, including planning for emergencies and rescue, and appropriately supervising work at height.
3. Conducting risk assessment and implementing precautionary measures as a safeguard.
4. Providing a suitable working platform for work at height with safe access and egress, and proper fencing.
5. Using personal fall arrest systems (including safety harnesses, lanyards and appropriate anchorage) whenever it is impracticable to provide a safe working platform/access and egress/place of work. Safety nets should be provided as a last resort.
6. Selecting a fall arrest system with regard to pertinent factors including:
  - (a) nature of the activity to be performed;
  - (b) degree of mobility required;
  - (c) workplace conditions such as the presence of hot objects, heat-producing operations, chemical/electrical hazards, sharp objects, abrasive surfaces, moving equipment, unguarded openings, path of user movement and/or fall hazards along such paths, any continuous protection offered by the existing anchorage system vis-à-vis the work activity;
  - (d) availability of anchorage points;

- (e) environment factors; and
  - (f) hazards and corresponding precautionary measures.
7. Providing sufficient information, training and supervision to ensure the safety and health of all persons employed.
  8. Refer to the *Guidance Notes on Classification and Use of Safety Belts and their Anchorage Systems* (<http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/os/C/belt.pdf>) on the Labour Department's website.