

Safety & Health Circular No. 02/2010

Working at Height (Re-issuance)

Date: 29 January 2010

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

In the light of a series of serious or fatal accidents involving working at height on construction sites since the beginning of 2010, this circular concerning advice on working at height is re-issued.

Fall from height is a common cause of site injuries and fatality. 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. There are specific 'regulatory' and 'code of practice' requirements stipulated in regard to working at height including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Observing Construction Sites (Safety) Regulations—in particular Regulations 38 and 40.
2. Planning properly for all work at height including planning for emergencies and rescue procedures.
3. Conducting risk assessment and implement precautionary measures as a safeguard.
4. Providing appropriate supervision for all work at height.
5. Providing a suitable working platform for work at height with safe access and egress, as well as proper fencing.
6. Using personal fall arrest systems—including safety harnesses, lanyards and appropriate anchorage—when it is impracticable to provide a safe working platform and/or safe access and egress. Safety nets should also be provided as a last resort.
7. Selecting appropriate fall arrest systems—taking into account pertinent factors including:

- (a) nature of the activity to be performed;
 - (b) degree of mobility required;
 - (c) workplace conditions—such as presence of hot objects, heat-producing operations, chemical or electrical hazards, sharp objects, abrasive surfaces, moving equipment, unguarded openings, path of user movement 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.
8. Providing site staff with sufficient information, training and supervision to ensure the safety and health of all persons employed.
9. Refer to *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 Labour Department's website for more information.

If you have any enquiries, please contact The Occupational Safety and Health Branch of the Labour Department on 2559 2297, or e-mail: enquiry@labour.gov.hk