

Safety & Health Circular No. 13/2014

Bad Practices Observed on Construction Sites

Date: 3 April 2014

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

The bad practices observed on the Housing Authority New Works construction sites during safety audits and inspections under the Housing Authority Safety Auditing System (HASAS), the Housing Authority Lift & Escalator Nominated Sub-contracts Safety Auditing System (HALENSAS) and the Surprise Safety Inspection Programme (SSIP) respectively have raised our concern over site safety. Contractors must ensure construction workplace safety and health, properly supervise and carefully manage operations on sites at all levels to prevent accidents and incidents. Therefore, contractors should strengthen site safety management, step up vigilance, tighten site supervision and conduct regular inspection to improve the situation.

Extracted below are some of the bad practices to be attended, which are certainly not exhaustive –

- A. Working at height
 - 1. Guard-rails are not properly installed and/or securely closed.
 - 2. No adequate support for bamboo scaffold.
 - 3. Working platform on bamboo scaffolding is not closely boarded.
 - 4. Ladder is not extended to 1 meter above the landing or working platform as hand hold.
 - 5. No handrails are provided on both sides of stairs.
 - 6. Toe-board at least 200mm high above working platform is not provided.
 - 7. Workplace is not provided with safe access and egress.

- B. Protection against falling objects
 - 8. Refuse chute/floor opening is not properly covered.

- C. Housekeeping
 - 9. Ample accumulation of construction waste on site.
 - 10. Waste material with projecting nails.
 - 11. Drainage pipe stored on site is not properly wedged.
 - 12. Waste disposal on top of lift car.

- D. Electrical supply system
 - 13. Distribution box is unlocked and/or not securely mounted on support.
 - 14. Electric supply is connected to many dividers.
 - 15. Trailing cables are laid on ground.
 - 16. Protective sheathing of electric cable is damaged and/or socket is not maintained in good condition.

- E. Lifting operation
 - 17. Multiple slings are connected to the hook without the use of shackles/rings.
 - 18. Single wrap choker hitch is used in lieu of the double wrap choker hitch.
 - 19. Outriggers of truck-mounted cranes are not fully extended and timber blockings are not placed under the outrigger floats.
 - 20. Lifting zone is not fenced off.

To summarize, precautionary measures with respect to working at height, protection against falling objects, housekeeping, electrical supply system and lifting operation are the major areas that need to be improved by contractors.

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