

Safety & Health Circular No. 39 / 2014

Safety of Falsework on Construction Sites

Date: 8 September 2014

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

Contractors are obliged to conform to pertinent enactments, regulations and also contractual provisions to ensure safety of all persons and safe operations on site at all times. Non-performance and / or inaction to rectify the non-compliance may jeopardize site safety. Non-compliance also reflects deficiencies in the safety management or unsafe conditions or operations on site.

Recent surprise site inspections by Labour Department to some new works construction sites has revealed irregularities of falsework leading to issue of suspension notices to the concerned portion of works.

Contractors are reminded to strictly adhere to the approved drawings for construction and to comply with the following requirements with respect to falsework for which non-compliance may lead to the issue of suspension notice, prosecution or warning by Labour Department :

1. provision of design drawings and specifications specifying the framing and construction of the falsework;
2. provision of method statement for the erection, using and dismantling of the falsework;
3. periodic inspection of falsework by a competent engineer of suitable discipline (e.g. structural engineering) at regular intervals not exceeding 14 days immediately preceding each use of the falsework;
4. ensuring the ratio of the height to the least base dimension of the standalone falsework not to exceed 3:1 or 3.5:1 for erection outside and within buildings respectively;
5. provision of adequate support for standalone falsework to prevent buckling, sway or collapse by means of bracing and lacing;
6. erecting the falsework in good ground conditions;
7. avoiding to use the falsework when apparent patent defect is found on the falsework members such as deformation, buckling or bending;

8. avoiding to use the falsework when excessive rusting is found on the falsework members;
9. avoiding to use the falsework when component(s) is / are missing such as bottom base plate.

To achieve the zero target of incident, contractors are reminded to effect safety measures, step up vigilance and strengthen safety management on all fronts to keep the site and works in an orderly state appropriate to the avoidance of danger to all persons.