

Safety & Health Circular No. 63 / 2015

Enhanced Safety Measures for Formation and Use of a Soil Platform

. Date: 11 November 2015

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In a recent Dangerous Occurrence (DO) happened on a non-Housing Authority (HA) site, an excavator overturned from a 7m high soil working platform that was retained by a concrete block wall during soil trimming and this led to the injury of the excavator operator. To prevent similar accidents on HA sites, contractors are strongly advised to take the following enhanced safety measures for formation and use of a soil platform:-

- (a) The design, method statement and risk assessment for formation and use of a soil platform, including the concrete block wall system, shall be reviewed and revised when necessary.
- (b) Platform crest shall be set back and retaining height of concrete blocks shall be kept to the minimum
- (c) Mobile cranes instead of excavators shall be used for lifting of concrete blocks.
- (d) Concrete blocks shall be tied to the king posts by steel waling and their stability shall be monitored regularly and reviewed and revised where necessary.
- (e) Settlement markers shall be installed for monitoring of concrete blocks wall movements.
- (f) The soil slope surface shall be covered with cement slurry with weep holes to minimize infiltration of rain water.

Incident

- (g) Barriers with warning signs shall be erected to restrict the type of machinery to the platform and prevent machineries from being too close to the edge of the platform.
- (h) Refresher training shall be provided to all site workers and supervisory staff. Safety management workshop shall be conducted for project management staff to enhance the safety awareness in safe work planning which include the detailed risk analysis and risk assurance.

The design submission and checking / control procedures similar to excavation and lateral support works shall be adopted. The design submission of the soil platform to the project team for vetting shall include, but not limited to, the following:-

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(a) Details of the installation and dismantling sequence of the platform and concrete block.

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(b) Details of the site supervision and compaction control testing requirements for the soil fills and concrete blocks.

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(c) Details of drainage provisions at various stages of construction.

The content of this circular should not be regarded as exhaustive in respect of matters covered by relevant safety legislation. Contractors should formulate relevant safe working procedures and management systems according to the actual environment and operations on their own construction sites.