



Merry Christmas from Lincsafe (H&S) Ltd!

December 2016

With the winter months drawing in, thoughts for health and safety professionals in the construction sector turn to ensuring adequate safety measures are in place to help protect employees during potentially hazardous conditions.

Workplace injury and illness in the construction industry cost the UK economy around £14.3 billion in 2013 according to official government statistics. Ensuring this figure reduces is both a safety and financial concern for the construction industry, and especially prominent where night-time working is concerned. One of the areas most apparent for night-time working hours is highways construction. Workers face potential dangers in the form of fast-passing traffic, heavy-duty machinery and slip and trip hazards, all under the conditions of reduced visibility. Britain's roads are some of the busiest in the world and while national figures show casualties are at their lowest level for over 40 years, overall injuries to the 4000 road workers on the UK's roads has risen according to the Highways Agency.

Furthermore, there is increased risk during long working hours of desensitisation with traditional forms of signage, so much so that potentially vital safety measures are ignored. How many of us for example, take stock of the fire exit signs that are present in our workplaces every working day of our lives? Combine this with high workloads and modern-day distractions in the form of mobile devices, and in the construction environment, you are leading to a potentially fatal accident.

What measures then, can site managers employ to ensure its workers are adequately protected?

Lincsafe have recently been made aware that a national Contractor has set a new minimum standard for Fit to Work certification standards. Personnel undertaking safety critical work (SCW) will require evidence for their medical fitness to be in place. This is not new to the industry as tower crane, tele-handler, DVLA group 2 operatives already have to provide this information.

What is Safety Critical Work (SCW)?

Safety critical work is defined as:
"Where the ill health of an individual may compromise their ability to undertake a task defined as safety critical, thereby posing a significant risk to the health and safety of others".

In construction the following have been defined as 'safety critical':-

- * All mobile plant operators
- * Road workers (high speed carriageways)
- * Rail track / side workers
- * Asbestos licensed workers (these require specific examination)
- * Tunnellers, or those working in a confined space (these require specific examination)
- * Scaffolders
- * Crane Operators
- * Tower Crane Operators (these require specific examination)

While re-training and refresher courses can help remind employees of vital safety practices, the answer perhaps lies in new technology that can help employees to be more conscious of their surroundings in low visibility conditions. Site managers will therefore be turning to new high visibility material such as Nightview, a world first in reflective webbing, which has been developed specifically to help improve safety during hours of lower light.

While accidents can and will happen, health and safety professionals must continue to invest in materials and products that help to facilitate safe working practices for both construction workers and their employers. While traditional signage can help, there is a risk employees have become desensitised to material over long working hours. Attention grabbing technology then, can help to ensure a safe future for all in the construction industry.¹

Lincsafe have carried out night audits for clients to ensure their operatives are working to safe practices as per their procedures, please feel free to contact us for a quote relating to this or any other H&S inquiry.



¹ http://www.shponline.co.uk/construction-safety-in-the-darker-winter-months/?cid=homepage_7th-9th

Mobile Plant Operators' will include operators of all self propelled, piling, ground works and demolition ride on/driven machines. It will also include all mobile elevated work platforms (MEWPS) - scissor and booms, but excludes 'non driven' access equipment such as Pop Ups or similar.

A health assessment is undertaken before the person is permitted to work in a safety critical environment.

What is a Medical Fitness Assessment for a Safety Critical Worker?

It is a medical assessment of an individual's 'fitness for task' against defined criteria and the use of professional judgement to ensure that an individual is fit to perform a task effectively and without risk to their own or others health and safety. General Practitioners (GP's) are not usually versed in such areas as health screening for the workplace and will not be accepted for standard plant operatives.

Lincsafe spoke to a representative at Build UK who said they do not state which trades should be subject to a SCW. In the future there will be more clarity on this.

Should you require any further details or support, please contact Lincsafe.

HSE

GO TO

Do not pass go,



UPDATE

Worker dies when temporary platform collapses

A worker died and two others were badly injured at a construction site in Putney, when a temporary platform collapsed.

Southwark Crown Court heard how, on 29 October 2012, a carpenter and a steel-fixer had been standing on a temporary wooden platform above a stairwell opening on the 9th floor of a construction site when the platform suddenly gave way beneath them. They fell around sixteen metres down the opening. Both men landed on the partly-constructed concrete staircase below, where the carpenter sadly sustained fatal injuries. The steel-fixer survived the fall but was so seriously injured that it took almost 3 years for him to recover sufficiently to be able to return to work.

An engineer's assistant who was working in the stairwell on a lower level was hit by falling debris and also sustained serious injuries.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that similar platforms had been constructed on other floors throughout the construction site, by using timber joists supported by unsuitable joist hangers with plywood fixed on top. The platforms, which were part of 'temporary works' were neither built to an agreed safe design, nor was the quality of the build checked by those in control of the site, even though they were crucial to the safety of workers on upper floors.

Karen Morris, HM Inspector of Health & Safety, said "The risks of falling from height are well-known, and the risk of joist hanger failure is well-documented. This tragic incident illustrates what can happen if temporary works are not properly organised. All those who have a role in planning and managing work on site must take responsibility for ensuring that serious risks are properly controlled."

St James Group Limited, of Berkeley House, Portsmouth Road, Cobham, Surrey, the Principal Contractor, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 22(1)(a), Construction (Design and Management) [CDM] Regulations 2007, and was fined £600,000 and ordered to pay costs of £14,935.54.

Mitchellson Formwork and Civil Engineering Limited, of Mitchellson House, Horton Trading Estate, Horton, Slough, Berkshire, the contractors responsible for constructing the platforms, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 13(2), of the Construction (Design and Management) [CDM] Regulations 2007, and was fined £400,000 and ordered to pay costs of £14,935.54.

RGF Construction Limited, of Howard Road, Seer Green, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, a site agent who assisted with managing the work, was found guilty at an earlier hearing on 4 July 2016 of breaching Regulations 13(2), and 28(2) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007. The company was fined £20,000.



View of partially collapsed working platform. ¹

¹ <http://press.hse.gov.uk/2016/worker-dies-when-temporary-platform-collapses/>

Window fitter in court after worker suffered fatal head injuries

A Southampton window installation company has been fined after a worker suffered fatal head injuries following a fall from a ladder.

Brighton Magistrates Court heard how Mark Taylor, 48, a window fitter from Southampton, was helping in the installation of UPVC windows at a 3 storey house in Brighton on the 10 September 2014. He was working from an unsecured ladder when it slipped sideways and he fell to the ground. The father of two was taken to hospital suffering from head injuries but died the following day.

The Health and Safety Executive investigation found Kevin McLean trading as South Coast Installations, failed to ensure that the work at height was adequately planned and carried out in a manner, which was safe.

Worker seriously injured in mobile platform fall

A Buckinghamshire waste equipment maintenance firm has been fined after a worker suffered serious head injuries when a mobile elevating work platform (MEWP) overturned.

Geoffrey Hatton, 49, from County Durham, was in the process of dismantling a compactor at a site in Wilmslow, Cheshire when the incident occurred on the 19th January 2015.

Minshull Street Crown Court heard that Mr Hatton, who was in the MEWP, and a colleague, were taking large pieces of cladding off the frame of a compactor. A large piece of the cladding came into contact with the MEWP and caused it to fall over. Mr Hatton fractured his skull and two ribs in the incident and spent two months in hospital.

Alton Towers' owners fined £5million over Smiler crash

The owners of Alton Towers have been fined £5million with costs of £69,955.40 following a rollercoaster collision which left 16 people injured, a number of them seriously.

Two young women on the Smiler ride suffered leg amputations and others suffered severe injuries when their carriage collided with a stationary carriage on the same track on 2 June 2015.

Stafford Crown Court heard that on the day of the incident engineers overrode the Smiler's control system without the knowledge and understanding to ensure it was safe to do so.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found no fault with the track, the cars, or the control system that keeps the cars apart from each other when the ride is running.

Investigators found the root cause to be a lack of detailed, robust arrangements for making safety critical decisions. The whole system, from training through to fixing faults, was not strong enough to stop a series of errors by staff when working with people on the ride.

Following the incident Alton Towers made technical improvements to the ride and changed their systems.

Kevin McLean trading as South Coast Installations pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(1) of the Work at Height Regulations and was fined £10,000 and ordered to pay x costs.

HSE Inspector Amanda Huff, said: "Mark Taylor's family have been devastated because simple steps where not taken to secure the ladder he was using. If Kevin McLean had ensured a proper risk assessment was carried out this tragic incident could have been prevented."¹

¹

<http://press.hse.gov.uk/2016/window-fitter-in-court-after-worker-suffered-fatal-head-injuries/>

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found serious safety failings by Cole Mechanical Services Ltd. The MEWP was being used outside when it was only suitable for internal work, the firm's employees were not trained in how to use MEWPS or how to safely erect tower scaffolding, and no risk assessment had been conducted for the work being carried out. In addition, at the time of the incident another worker was working on a fragile roof with no protection to prevent falls.

Cole Mechanical Services Ltd of Ashbridge Road, Chesham, Buckinghamshire pleaded guilty to a breach of Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £30,000 and ordered to pay costs of £8995.00.¹

¹

<http://press.hse.gov.uk/2016/worker-seriously-injured-in-mobile-platform-fall/ment-disturbs-asbestos/>

Merlin Attractions Operation Ltd of 3 Market Close, Poole, Dorset pleaded guilty to breaching section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act etc, 1974 and were fined £5million with costs of £69,955.40.

Neil Craig, head of operations for HSE in the Midlands said:

"People visiting theme parks should be able to enjoy themselves safely. On 2 June last year Merlin Attractions Operations Ltd failed to protect their customers, they badly let them down.

"This avoidable incident happened because Merlin failed to put in place systems to allow engineers to work safely on the ride while it was running. This made it all too easy for a whole series of unchecked mistakes, not just one push of a button, to result in tragic consequences.

"Since the incident Alton Towers have made improvements to the ride and their safety protocols, and the lessons learned have been shared industry wide."¹

¹

<http://press.hse.gov.uk/2016/alton-towers-owners-fined-over-smiler-crash/>

Need to Know news...

Whats new in
2017

Please find the Lincsafe (Health & Safety) latest training dates for 2017, at our offices in Lincolnshire between Lincoln & Scunthorpe. All prices inc Books and Certification; if you would like further information on Lincsafe (Health & Safety) courses please contact our office.

Asbestos Awareness Cat A UKATA – Initial in the Morning and Refresher in the afternoon.

24th April – Initial £65per person – Refresher £50per person.+VAT

6th November – Initial £65per person – Refresher £50per person.+VAT

IOSH Managing Safely 4 day course

January 12,13,19,20 – 2017 £465pp + VAT

May – 4,5,11,12 – 2017 £465pp + VAT

IOSH Managing Safely in Construction 4 day

February 7th, 14th,21st, 28th – £600+VAT per person.

IOSH Managing Safely Refresher 1 day

24th Feb £150pp+VAT

14th July £150pp+VAT

20th October £150pp+VAT

IOSH Working Safely 1 Day course

3rd March – £120pp+VAT

30th June – £120pp+VAT

24th November – £120pp+VAT

CSkills SMSTS 5 Day course

January 23,24,30,31 and 6 Feb. £500pp+VAT

June 1,2,8,9,16 – £500pp +VAT

September 4,5,11,12,18 – £500pp+VAT

CSkills SMSTS Refresher 2 Day course

3rd & 4th – April – £290pp+VAT

12th & 13th July – £290pp+VAT

September 28th & 29th – £290pp+VAT

CSkills SSSTS 2 day Course

5th & 6th January – £290pp+VAT

19th & 20th June – £290pp+VAT

27th & 28th November – £290pp+VAT

IOSH Safety for Executives & Directors 1 day course.

15th February 2017 - £140pp +VAT.

All prices inc Books and Certification; if you would like further information please contact our Lincolnshire office on:-

01673 876 150

or

djl@lincsafe.co.uk

If you use the Checklists and forms from the CITB / Cskills GE700 booklet and would like to download them for free please find them here on the following link from the CITB website:-
<http://www.citb.co.uk/publications/companion-websites/ge-700-companion/checklists-and-forms/>