

25/09/2019

Fall from scaffold

11 September 2019

Incident overview

A 48 year old male worker fell approximately 5.7 metres from the top deck of a mobile scaffold he was dismantling on a residential site in Sydney. He sustained serious head injuries and later died as a result of these injuries. This is the 8th serious incident in NSW this year that has involved scaffold or is a result of a fall from height.



The scaffold structure on the site of the incident

The investigation

- SafeWork NSW inspectors responded to the incident.
- SafeWork NSW commenced an investigation to determine the cause and circumstances of the incident.

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Safety information

Each year SafeWork NSW responds to incidents where workers are injured falling from a height. Most of these incidents involve falls from scaffolds, roofs, ladders, through open penetrations and from unprotected edges.

Businesses are reminded of their duty to identify hazards and manage risks to health and safety in accordance with the provisions of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) and [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017](#).

Consider reasonably practicable control measures to manage the risk of falling from a mobile scaffold. Ensure:

- The scaffold is suitable for the task and set up on a firm, level foundation.
- A copy of the manufacturer's assembly instructions is available and instructions are followed.
- All required components are installed, including guardrails, toeboards, diagonal bracing and internal access.
- The components are inspected before assembly and in good condition.
- The workers assembling the scaffold are competent and hold a high risk work scaffolding licence (if a person or object could fall more than four metres from the scaffold deck).
- Site specific risks are identified, communicated to workers and controlled.
- A safe work method statement is prepared for all high-risk construction work. Additionally, for mobile scaffolds that remain on the same work site for more than 30 days:
- Regularly inspect assembled scaffolds to determine whether all components are present, correctly installed and in good condition.
- Implement a process for replacing faulty components and/or removing the scaffold from service if found to be defective.

Further information

Refer to the following guidance materials:

- [Managing the risk of falls at workplaces COP](#)
- [Erecting, altering and dismantling scaffolds](#)
- [Safe Work Australia Scaffolds and scaffolding work general guide](#)
- [Safe Work Australia Guide for scaffold inspection and maintenance](#)
- [Working at heights](#)
- [Pocket guide to construction safety](#)