

SAFETY ALERT

Subject: Prevention of unauthorised use of temporary access arrangements.

Number: 06/12

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Contact if different from above Sponsor:

Who should read this: Top Level Budget Holders, Prime Contractors, Private Finance Initiatives, Public, Private Partnership and other traditionally procured contracts, Project Managers, Site Estate Authority Teams and Property Managers with responsibility for MOD projects and Property Management Works Services (including the legacy work of EWCs/WSMs), Co-ordinating Authorising Engineers, Authorising Engineers Working at Height, and Authorised Persons Working at Height.

When it takes effect: Immediately

When it is due to expire: 31/03/2017

Health and Safety

1. Document Aim

To draw attention to those responsible for the provision of temporary access arrangements of the need to ensure that appropriate control measures are put in place to prevent unauthorised use of the access, particularly where this provides access to hazardous areas which would not normally be accessible.

2. Introduction

a. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONTENTS OF THIS ALERT WILL ENABLE COMPLIANCE WITH THE HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK ETC ACT 1974 AND ITS SUBORDINATE REGULATIONS.

b. The appropriate MOD officer shall arrange for the Maintenance Management Organisation (MMO) contractor or other organisations, to carry out all actions in accordance with this Alert.

c. On MOD Establishments occupied by United States Visiting Forces (USVF) responsibility is jointly held by USVF and DIO (USF). At base level this jointly managed organisation is to take appropriate action to implement the contents of this Alert. Where this Alert contains procedures which differ significantly from USVF practice DIO (USF) code of practice will be issued.

3. Background

A recent incident on a MOD establishment where an unauthorised person gained access to a fragile roof has resulted in that person sustaining fatal injuries when the roofing “see through” panel on which he stood gave way and he fell approximately 6m to the solid floor below.

Whilst it is understood that it would be difficult to prevent anyone who is determined to gain access to a scaffold or other temporary access equipment without authorisation, there is a duty to ensure that reasonable and practicable measures are taken to prevent unauthorised access.

4. Requirement

Where temporary access arrangements are provided to enable works to be undertaken, those who are responsible for commissioning or managing the work are to ensure that a suitable and sufficient risk assessment is undertaken and that this includes the necessary control measures that are to be applied which will prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, any unauthorised access to the working area. Furthermore there is a need to ensure that the work area is secure when no work is being undertaken.

It is not possible to prescribe specific control measures for every situation, however, it is expected that for scaffolding, the following hierarchy be applied (dependent upon the degree of risk) when deciding on which controls would be suitable to reduce the risk of unauthorised access.

Tubular or System Scaffolding

- Install fencing around the access point making sure that it is secure.
- Fit a proprietary access gate or barrier which can be locked or clamped shut.
- Fit 2 metre high sheeting around the first level of the structure.
- Remove any ladders, if this is not possible, then ensure that any ladders are suitably and securely boarded, preventing their use.

In all cases the following signs are to be applied and clearly visible:

- ‘No Unauthorised Access’
- Turn any Scaff Tags so that the ‘Do Not Use’ notice is clearly displayed at the end of the working day or when not in use.

Signs must be in accordance with the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996.

When a scaffold is erected, prior to it being used the recipient of the handover certificate from the erecting organisation must ensure that the appropriate access control measures identified in the risk assessment and method statement are in place at that time.

At the end of the working day such checks as is necessary should be undertaken to ensure that the access control measures identified in the risk assessment and method statement are in place and site secured.

Tower Scaffold

At the end of the working day, if a Tower Scaffold cannot be left in a secure location/condition which prevents unauthorised access; (e.g. a secure project site), the scaffold must be dismantled.

Mobile Elevated Work Platforms (MEWPs)

Removed from the area of work and securely parked when not in use with keys removed.

Ladders and Step Ladders

Remove and securely store ladders and step ladders when not in use.

5. Review

As part of the “Learning from Experience” process the advice contained within the Alert will be reviewed once investigations into the incident have been completed and any further requirements identified incorporated and re issued.