

Temporary Wall-Supported Platforms inside Lift Shafts

Temporary wall-supported platforms are frequently erected inside lift shafts of buildings or structures under construction. They are provided either as working platforms for the erection of lift shafts or as catch platforms for falling building materials and debris.

2. Collapses resulting from the failure of such platforms have in the past claimed the lives of workers. There have also been other serious accidents when construction workers sustained multiple injuries from failure of such platforms.

3. The safety of these platforms is governed by the provisions of the Construction Sites (Safety) Regulations. In addition, every employer has the general duty to ensure that a safe place of work is provided and maintained under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance, Cap 59. In view of the incidence of accidents, the Labour Department considers it necessary to implement forthwith stricter controls to safeguard workers operating on these platforms.

4. Where there are temporary wall-supported platforms inside lift shafts in building sites, the Labour Department would issue legal notices under section 7(4) of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance to require building contractors to adopt the following special measures :

- (a) Every temporary wall-supported platform inside a lift shaft on a building site should be **properly designed by an authorised person (AP) or a registered structural engineer (RSE)**. The plan prepared by the AP or RSE must contain all the necessary details and specifications of the platform and should be available on site for inspection by a factory inspector;
- (b) Every temporary wall-supported platform inside a lift shaft should be **constructed in accordance with the plan** prepared by the AP or RSE and **under the supervision of a competent person** appointed by the registered contractor of the building site in accordance with Construction Sites (Safety) Regulations. A record should be kept of the date of erection of each platform and the name of the person who supervised the work. This record should also be available on site for inspection by a factory inspector;

- (c) Risk assessment should be conducted by the competent person before work commences to dismantle a temporary wall-supported platform inside a lift shaft. The dismantling work should also be carried out under his or her supervision;
- (d) Suitable fall-arresting systems should be provided for and used by workers while engaged in removing materials accumulated on a temporary wall-supported platform inside a lift shaft or in dismantling the platform;
- (e) Steps should be taken to ensure that no materials are thrown, tipped or shot down onto a temporary wall-supported platform inside a lift shaft unless the platform has been designed for such purpose by the AP or RSE; and
- (f) Materials accumulated on a temporary wall-supported platform inside a lift shaft should be removed regularly.

5. Further information on these safety requirements may be obtained by reference to the following documents :

- (a) Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance
- general duties of employers under section 6A; and
- (b) Construction Sites (Safety) Regulations
- safety requirements of working places, scaffold etc. in Part VA.

6. A similar practice note has been issued to registered contractors.



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