



26 July 2013

All Approved Crane Contractors
Other Interested Parties

SAFETY CIRCULAR ON SAFE WORKING AT HEIGHTS FOR APPROVED CRANE CONTRACTORS (ACC)

In July 2013, a worker employed by an Approved Crane Contractor (ACC) was killed when he fell from height while carrying out tower crane installation work in a construction worksite. The deceased and co-workers were installing the tie-backs of the tower crane to an adjacent building at the 14th storey when the accident occurred. Preliminary investigations revealed that the deceased may have fallen from the tower crane tie-back during the installation work. This circular serves as a reminder to duty-holders of their statutory duties under the Workplace Safety and Health Act (WSH Act), the WSH (Work at Heights) Regulations 2013, as well as the other WSH subsidiary legislation, to ensure safe working at heights.

Measures to Address Fall Hazards

2 Under the WSH (Work at Heights) Regulations 2013, all ACCs shall fulfill their duties as the responsible person¹ (employer or principal²) of anyone who carries out or is to carry out any work at heights. This will include performing erection, dismantling or alteration of a mobile or tower crane while working at heights. As part of their duties, ACCs shall ensure the following:

- a) The travel restraint or fall arrest system used in the workplace
 - i. is of good construction, sound material and adequate strength;
 - ii. is free from patent defects; and
 - iii. is suitable and safe for the purpose for which it is intended;

¹ Under regulation 2 of the WSH (Work at Heights) Regulations 2013, A Responsible Person, in relation to a person who carries out or is to carry out any work at height, means (a) his employer; or (b) the principal under whose direction he carries out or is to carry out any such work.

² A Principal is any person or organization who engages another person or organization to supply labour or perform work under a contract for service.

- b) Every person using the travel restraint or fall arrest system is trained in the safe and correct use of the system.
- c) Where a fall arrest system is used in the workplace,
 - i. the system shall incorporate a shock absorbing device, limiting forces to the user's body; and
 - ii. In event of a fall, enough fall clearance is available to prevent the user from hitting the ground, objects or surfaces.

3 In addition to the above, ACCs shall also ensure that they comply with all the other safety requirements for working safely at heights as prescribed in the WSH (Work at Heights) Regulations 2013.

Safe Work Procedures and Permit to Work System for Work at Heights

4 Safe work procedures and permit-to-work system should be implemented to ensure work at heights is planned and carried out safely and systematically. Under the WSH (Work at Heights) Regulations 2013, the permit-to-work system will be required to be implemented for all hazardous work at heights³ with effect from 1 May 2014. Competent persons will be required to be appointed for the roles of the work-at-height Safety Assessor and Authorised Manager respectively under the permit-to-work system. This is to ensure that such work will only be allowed to be carried out after all necessary control measures have been implemented.

5 For further practical guidance, Occupiers and Responsible Persons are advised to refer to the Approved Code of Practice for Working Safely at Heights, as well as the various relevant Guidelines on Work at Heights issued by the WSH Council (e.g. Guidelines on Personal Protective Equipment for Work at Heights). Should you need further information, please contact the Ministry at mom_oshd@mom.gov.sg.

Yours faithfully



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 FOR COMMISSIONER FOR WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH
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³ Hazardous work at heights in general refers to situations where a person is liable to fall a distance of more than 3 metres.