

FALLS FROM HEIGHT IN THE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

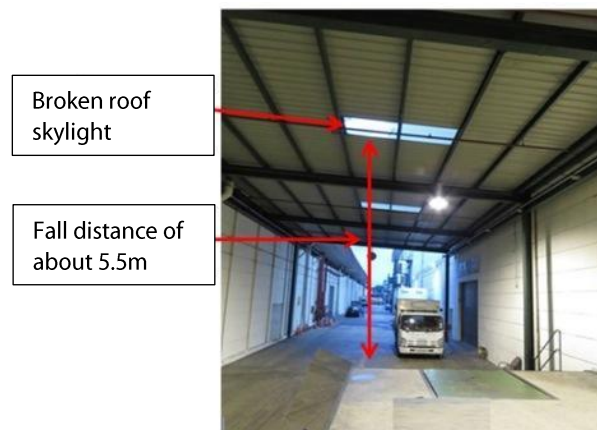
Fall from height accidents, while not common in the manufacturing industry, have nonetheless occurred on manufacturing premises. Non-routine work, such as activities involving workplace renovation or facilities management, may require workers to work at height.

Though such works are typically undertaken by contractors, manufacturing companies are reminded of their duties as workplace occupiers and/or principals under the [Workplace Safety and Health \(WSH\) Act](#). Companies must put in place, as far as reasonably practicable, measures to ensure that every worker on the premises is able to carry out their work safely and without risks to health.

Below are two examples where contractor workers had lost their lives due to falling from heights at manufacturing premises.

Example 1: Worker fell through skylight panel

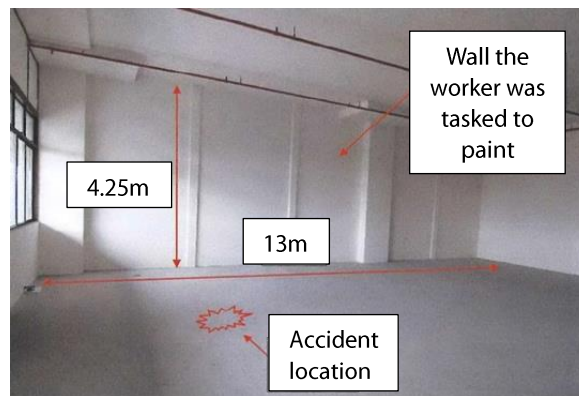
In 2016, a worker was carrying out painting works on the metal roof of a sheltered loading bay when he stepped on a polycarbonate skylight panel and fell through. The worker was sent to the hospital where he later passed away.



Scene of the accident

Example 2: Worker found lying beside A-frame ladder

In 2019, a worker tasked to perform painting, wall patching and housekeeping work was found unconscious on the floor beside an A-frame ladder. He was sent to hospital where he died of his injuries.



Scene of the accident

Duties of Occupier and Principal

While occupiers and principals may not be directly involved in the work undertaken by a contractor, they play an important role in ensuring the work can be completed safely.

Recommendations

Below are recommendations on what occupiers and principals can do when engaging a contractor to work at heights:

Contractor selection:

- Review the past WSH performance of each potential contractor. Company WSH performance data may be obtained at MOM's [CheckSafe](#) website;
- Set WSH requirements in the tender document, including risk assessments (RAs) and safe work procedures; and
- Verify that potential contractors have the expertise to carry out the work they will be engaged to do.

Competent workers:

- Check worker training records to confirm that workers have received the necessary training for the task (e.g. work-at-height training).

Risk communication and review:

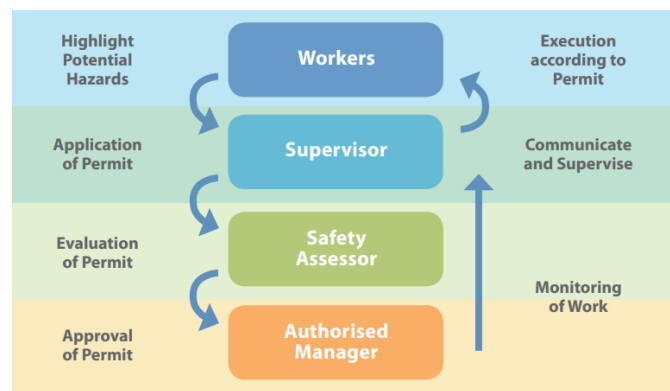
- Before starting work, provide the contractor with WSH induction training;
- Brief the contractor on the hazards at the designated work area; and
- Review the contractor's RA forms and verify that listed risk controls are implemented effectively.

Eliminate or reduce fall-from-height risk:

- Implement a Fall Prevention Plan (FPP) in your workplace where work at heights is carried out;
- Implement strict security access to all work areas with fall-from-height risk;
- Instruct workers to work at ground level where possible, else check that suitable equipment has been provided (e.g. mobile elevated work platform) for workers to work safely at height;
- Ensure there is a safe way for workers to get to and from heights (e.g. the roof); and
- Ensure no open sides and fragile surfaces at the designated work area(s), else provide secure anchor points or lifelines to which fall arrest equipment or travel restraints can be hooked.

Permit-to-Work (PTW) system:

- Put in place a PTW system for all work where a person could fall a distance of more than three metres. Occupiers or principals may consider taking on the role of Authorised Manager in a PTW system.



Typical stages in a PTW system

Be pro-active:

- Provide a channel for contractor workers to provide feedback on WSH concerns;
- Conduct ad-hoc WSH inspections;
- Conduct regular work coordination meetings with the contractor to discuss WSH issues; and
- Encourage contractors to come onboard WSH Council's [bizSAFE](#) programme.

The [WSH Act](#) defines the general duties for occupiers, employers, self-employed persons, principals and persons at work. For more information, please refer to the [WSH \(Work at Heights\) Regulations 2013](#), WSH Council's Code of Practice [for Working Safely at Heights](#), and [WSH Guidelines for Contractor Management](#).