

Safety and health alert

16/05 Failure of scaffold hoist guardrail

Incident

A bricklayer fell approximately 2 metres onto a hoist platform when a hoist guardrail on the top lift of a scaffold failed. The injuries caused the bricklayer to be off work for 8 weeks.

The scaffold had a slide-along guardrail system, which incorporated a single frame brace tucked inside a scaffold tube at one end and a 90 degree coupler at the other end.

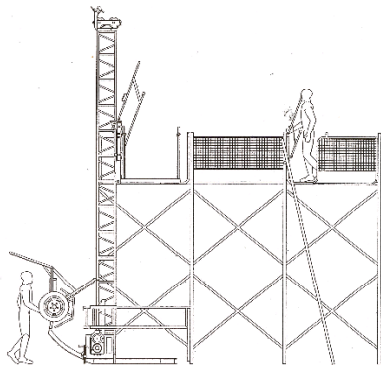
The guardrail system was not identified as a potential hazard before work commenced although it was not in accordance with the requirements of AS/NZS 1576.

Factors to consider

- The scaffold had a guardrail system which incorporated a single frame brace (top rail) tucked inside a scaffold tube and a 90 degree coupler as a 'latch/lock' and without a midrail and kick plate.
- The guardrail system was not identified as a potential hazard before commencement of work.
- The scaffold platforms did not conform with AS/NZS 1576 for scaffolds in excess of 2 metres in height which require edge protection in the form of guardrailings and toeboards, or mesh screens incorporating kickplates.

Recommendations

1. A top and mid guardrail is the preferred minimum edge protection at hoist access and egress openings in accordance with AS 4576.
2. Self-closing gates should be provided at ladder access and egress openings in accordance with AS 4576 and 1576.
3. The guardrail should be able to be secured into position with a positive locking device in order to prevent future displacement.
4. Ensure guardrails are locked into place to prevent opening outwards.
5. Ensure that all scaffolds are constructed in accordance with AS/NZS 1576 Parts 1-6.
6. Scaffolds more than 4 metres in height are to be inspected by a competent person – (a) before the scaffold is used; (b) after the scaffold is altered or repaired; and (c) at least every 30 days.
7. Ensure all notifiable injuries are reported to WorkSafe in accordance with Section 23(l) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984 as at 1 January 2005.



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Some items in the diagram are patent pending,
such as the Ladder Access and Hoist Landing
Gate”.

Further information

- Standards Australia – Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 1576 Parts 1-6.
- AS/NZS 4576:1995 – Guidelines for Scaffolding.

For further information on this summary please contact WorkSafe on 9327 8777 or access the WorkSafe website at www.docep.wa.gov.au.

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