

CONSTRUCTION INFONET - ISSUE 09.06

An e-bulletin for clients, designers, contractors and health and safety specialists

CONSTRUCTION FATAL INJURY STATISTICS 2005/06

The number of fatal injuries to workers in construction during 2005/06 fell to 59 (provisional) from the final figure of 69 in 2004/05. The fatal injury rate fell by 14% to 3.0 per 100,000 workers. These are the lowest levels noted on record. The detailed picture for construction can be found in the recently published [statistics report](#). The most relevant construction graph is attached for your immediate use.

Stephen Williams, HSE Chief Inspector of Construction said: "These figures are very good and I am pleased with progress so far. It is positive news that HSE in partnership with all in industry - employers, unions and stakeholder bodies - are driving down fatalities on sites".

FATAL INJURIES SINCE 1 APRIL 2006

The construction fatal injuries that have occurred since 1 April 2006 have included the following categories in descending order of frequency:

- *Falls from height* - this remains the largest single cause of death and has included falls through [fibre cements roofs](#) and from [scaffold towers](#);
- *Lifting operations* - these all involved [cranes](#) and occurred during timber frame erection, demolition and plant installation work;
- *Electrocution* - the majority arose from contact with [overhead powerlines](#) and others occurred during refurbishment work on domestic premises;
- *Mobile plant* - these deaths involved excavators and [telehandlers](#) overturning or reversing;
- *Collapse of structures* - these arose from a [scaffold](#) collapse and from a wall falling during refurbishment work on domestic premises.

ASBESTOS CAMPAIGN

Asbestos-related disease caused by past exposure to asbestos is currently responsible for up to 3,500 deaths a year, making it the UK's biggest work related killer. On 7th September HSE Chairman Bill Callaghan launched a campaign entitled "[Don't take the gamble](#)". The campaign will involve targeted activity in trade and regional press as well as information being sent directly to just over 80,000 dutyholders. Campaign material includes free promotional playing cards and information packs.

Plumbers, carpenters and builders etc may be exposed to asbestos when undertaking their day-to-day work. It is essential that all building and maintenance workers are aware that asbestos is still present in many buildings and that they know what precautions to take. See [Press Release](#) for further information.

A new 'one-stop shop' asbestos website www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos includes comprehensive advice and guidance together with downloadable versions of most of the campaign material. HSE and Local Authorities are carrying out targeted asbestos inspections throughout 2006/7.

DESIGNER AWARENESS DAYS 18th AND 19th SEPTEMBER 2006

Designer Awareness Days are to be run in conjunction with the BBC, PCM Safety and HSE. Architects, surveyors, engineers and others involved in the design of buildings and structures are invited to attend on one of two days in London at the BBC. Designers can have a key influence on injury and ill-health in the construction industry and early consideration of health and safety issues can resolve many of the problems that contractors face. [Further information](#) is on the HSE website.

CONSTRUCTION INFONET - ISSUE 09.06

An e-bulletin for clients, designers, contractors and health and safety specialists

RECENT COURT CASES

Case 1 - A contractor was fined £15,000 and ordered to pay £7,000 costs after a plasterer suffered serious cement burns whilst screeding a floor. The injured person had been kneeling in concrete without protective equipment e.g. kneepads and non-permeable clothing. A risk assessment had not been completed and neither workman nor site manager were aware of the dangers of working with wet cement. See press release for [further information](#).

Case 2 – a demolition contractor was fined £10,000 and ordered to pay £6,659 in costs after a worker suffered serious burns when the vehicle he was operating came into contact with an overhead cable. The injured person was raising the tipper bed of his vehicle when it came into contact with the 33kV line. See the press release for [further information](#) and information on [working safely near power lines](#).

Case 3 – A contractor was fined £3,000 and ordered to pay £3,028 costs following an incident in which an 18-year-old worker suffered partial amputation of three fingers when using a screed pump. A safety grill, designed to prevent access to mixing paddles inside the machine, had been removed and a safety interlock switch had been overridden. See press release for [further information](#)

CDM GUIDANCE IN PREPARATION

An industry led steering group is leading on creating guidance documents to support the revised CDM Regulations due to come into force in April 2007. The steering group members are from a wide cross section of the industry. See press release for [further information](#).

The steering group welcomes the input of all sections of the industry and particularly encourages other bodies involved in developing guidance to submit proposals to the steering group. Anyone wishing to contribute should contact the Chair, Kevin Fear (kevin.fear@citb.co.uk 01485 577451) or the secretary Stephanie Rafferty (stephanie.rafferty@hse.gsi.gov.uk 020 7717 2163).

BETTER BACKS CAMPAIGN 2006

The [Better Backs](#) campaign starts in October. HSE Inspectors will carry out construction project inspections and focus on: kerbs and paving slabs; paneled products; building blocks; drainage products e.g. manhole covers, frames and gully pots; lintels; and sand and aggregate. Inspectors will wish to be satisfied that suitable [manual handling risk assessments](#) have been carried out where such products are subject to manual handling and that control measures are implemented.

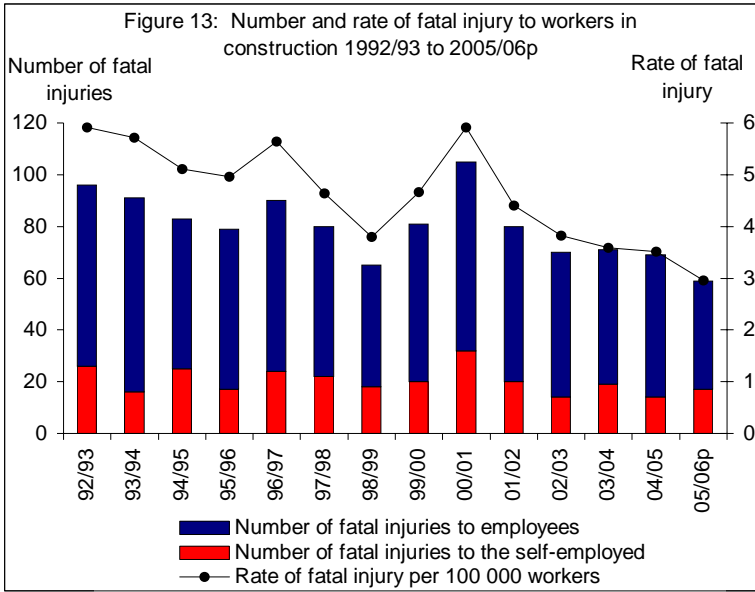
SCAFFOLD SAFETY INFORMATION SHEET

HSE Inspectors across Scotland have carried out site visits and held a number of events to raise awareness following three scaffold collapses in Scotland. Some inspections revealed sub-standard scaffolds erected and inspected by personnel with inadequate training, experience and skills to execute their roles competently. Many of the scaffolds were not designed when a design was required. An [information sheet](#) has been produced following consultation with CITB, NASC and SA-FE (Safe Access-Fall Elimination) which provides guidance on the expected standards in relation to scaffold operations particularly in relation to design issues and training requirements.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Philip Poynter
Construction Infonet Editor
September 2006

Fatal injuries to workers in construction

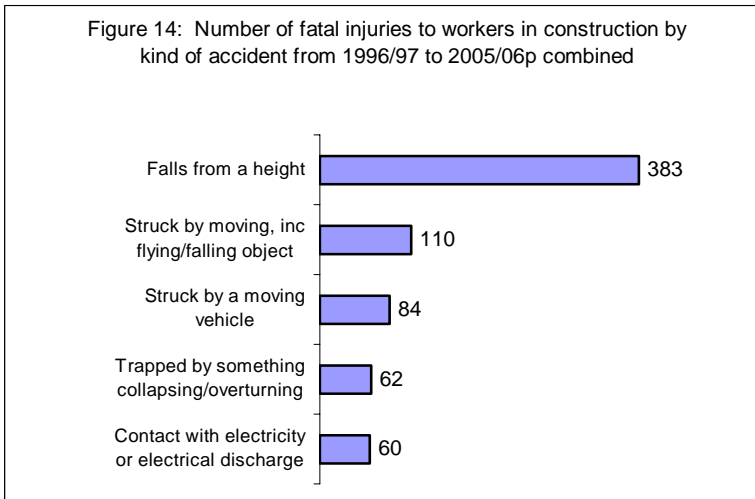


There were 59 fatal injuries to construction workers in 2005/06, a fall of 14% from 69 in 2004/05. The number of fatal injuries to employees in 2005/06 fell to 42, from 55 in 2004/05. However, the number of deaths to the self-employed rose from 14 to 17.

In 2005/06, 28% of all worker fatalities occurred in the construction industry. The proportion was 31% in the previous year.

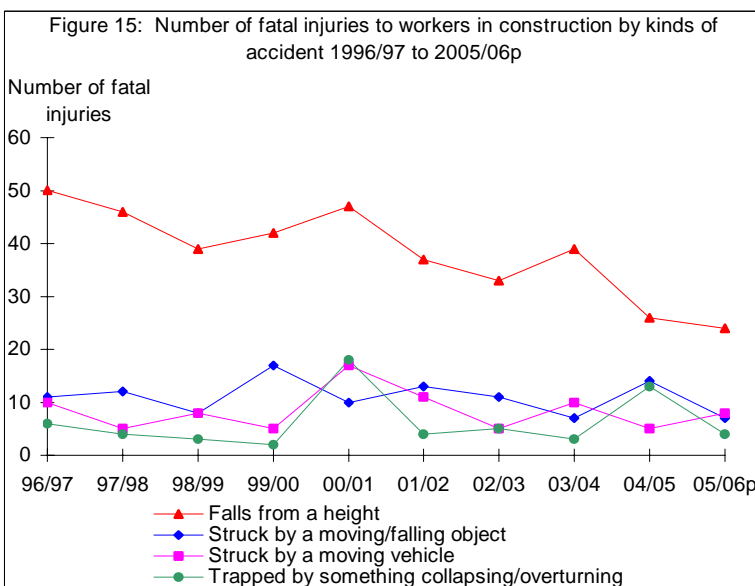
Of the 59 deaths, 8 occurred in the construction of commercial buildings, 8 in the construction of domestic buildings, 8 in the construction of highways, roads, airfields and sports facilities, 8 were in other construction work involving special trades and 7 were in the installation of electrical wiring and fitting.

The rate of fatal injury to workers has fallen by 50% since 2000/01 (5.91) to 2.95 in 2005/06. This is the lowest level on record.



Falls from a height account for around half of all fatalities in the period 1996/97 to 2005/06. This is the most common kind of fatal injury for both employees and the self-employed. Falls from a height mainly involve roofs, ladders, scaffolds and raised platforms.

After falls from a height, the most common kinds of fatal injuries to workers in the period are being struck by a moving/falling object (14%) being struck by a vehicle (11%); being trapped by something collapsing/overturning (8%) and contact with electricity or electrical discharge (8%).



In 2005/06, there were 24 fatal injuries to workers in the construction industry due to falling from a height, a decrease of 2 from 2004/05. This continues the downward trend of the past ten years. Of the 24 fatalities, 13 were as a result of falling from a height of more than 2m, although this type of accident has reduced considerably in recent years.

After falling from a height, the most common kinds of fatal injury are being struck by a moving/falling object, being struck by a moving vehicle and being trapped by something collapsing/overturning. In 2005/06, these kinds accounted for 7, 8 and 4 fatal injuries respectively. Deaths due to being trapped by something collapsing/overturning fell in 2005/06 by 69% to 4 from 13 in 2004/05.