
INSIDE
THIS
ISSUE

PG. 2

Are you working safely at height?
Fire Risk E-Bikes and E-Scooters

PG. 3

Loading and Unloading Reminders
The Accident Book
TATA Steel Fined

PG.4

Other Government News

PG. 5

Are You Working Safely with DSE
Building Control Secondary
Legislation

PG. 6

World Suicide Prevention Day
Electrical Hazard Protective
Footwear

PG. 7

Face Fit Testing

PG. 8

Free CDM Advice
AGA E-Learning Courses

HSE SEPTEMBER CAMPAIGN TO FOCUS ON MOVING AND HANDLING MATERIALS



Starting in early September 2023, HSE will be undertaking construction site inspections, focusing on moving and handling construction materials.

The inspections will be checking employers and workers know the risks, plan their work and are using sensible control measures to protect workers from injuries and aches, as well as pain and discomfort in joints, muscles and bones known as musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs).

These injuries can have a serious impact on workers' ability to perform tasks; their quality of life; and in some cases, their ability to stay in work and earn a living.

This latest health inspection initiative is supported by the 'Work Right Construction: Your Health Your Future' campaign to improve the long-term health of those working in construction.

Find out more about the campaign by visiting:

- [Work Right Construction: Your Health. Your Future](#)

Download our:

- [Manual handling advice for builders \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Manual Handling Assessment Charts \(MAC tool\) for employers \(.pdf\)](#)

ARE YOU WORKING SAFELY AT HEIGHT?

Falls when working at height remain the most common kind of workplace fatality.

HSE's [annual fatality statistics](#) reported that there were 40 fatal injuries caused by falling from height in 2022/23.

Make sure you take the necessary precautions and visit our [working at height website](#) for guidance on how you can protect workers.

The site also has a range of useful information and sources of advice for employers. They include [key messages](#) to follow before working from height and some [common work at height myths](#).

You can find guidance on the [safe use of ladders and stepladders](#), which includes advice on when and how you should use a ladder at work.

There are also [useful resources](#) available, including our relevant publications which are free to download.



FIRE RISK – E-BIKES AND E-SCOOTERS

It has been reported recently that the London Fire Brigade (LFB) have been called to one e-scooter or e-bike fire every two days this year – see [BBC News](#).



The fire produced by the chemical reaction from a battery measures between 1,000C and 2,000C. When a battery explodes, bits of molten metal are sprayed across the room.

There is a “Joint Code of Practice on the Protection from Fire of Construction Sites and Buildings undergoing Renovation”. This Code is used by the construction industry to set operating practices on construction sites and is also used by insurance companies. In the most recent update to the Code, a section was added for electric vehicle charging and it states;

“Storage of electric vehicles which utilise lithium-ion batteries to provide power, including cars, vans, bikes, and scooters, shall be prohibited within buildings under construction.”

There is an allowance for storage but only under strict conditions, which we will be unable to comply with due to the type of work we do.

Given the high risk of fire from these vehicles, it is essential that there are no e-bikes or e-scooters either stored or left on charge on site.

LOADING AND UNLOADING REMINDERS



Loading and unloading can be some of the most hazardous activities carried out on a site. People can fall from a height, be struck by a vehicle or moving equipment, or struck by something falling on them, so it's important to think carefully about how work can be done safely.

If you provide handling or access equipment such as scissor lifts for workers to use while loading and unloading vehicles, you must make sure the equipment is only used by people who are competent to do so.

You can find out more about training and instruction at our website:

[Provide information, training and supervision: Overview](#)

THE ACCIDENT BOOK: A VITAL DOCUMENT FOR YOUR BUSINESS

HSE's Accident Book is a valuable document that organisations can use to record the right information.



[The Accident Book](#) can be used to record details of all work-related accidents including injuries from accidents at work that employers must report under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 ([RIDDOR](#)).

The book contains 50 perforated accident record forms and is designed to support users in being GDPR compliant.

MIXING WITH RISK: TATA STEEL FINED £120,000 FOR SERIOUS HEAD INJURY

We speak to HSE inspector Gethyn Jones about a recent Tata Steel prosecution after a contract worker suffered permanent brain damage when he was struck by a scaffolding pole ejected by a cement mixer.

On 3 April 2017, Gavin Rowlands, an employee at Monolithic Refractories Limited, was part of a team that had been contracted to refurbish Tata Steel UK's molten metal ladles and tundishes at its site in Port Talbot, Wales. During the process of using an industrial paddle mixer to mix concrete, Gavin was struck by a scaffolding pole that had been used to try to open the mixer door. Gavin suffered a broken jaw and permanent brain damage.

We spoke to HSE inspector Gethyn Jones, who investigated the case, about the set of circumstances that led up to this incident.



Tata Steel UK routinely undertakes maintenance on their molten metal ladles. These are the big vessels that you typically see at steel works full of molten metal. These ladles are lined with refractory bricks and, as part of regular maintenance, every so often the old bricks have to be replaced,' explained Gethyn.

On this occasion, Tata had outsourced the bricklaying work to a company called Monolithic Refractories Ltd. This was a team of contractors who had worked in the steel works for a number of years and was very familiar with the operations there. From February 2017, Tata Steel had started a programme of training the Monolithic staff to do the bricklaying task. Tata was in charge of the work but, as these individuals were becoming competent, they'd be drip fed into the process and do more and more of the work independently.

'3 April 2017 was actually the day when the contract was due to be formally handed over to Monolithic and Monolithic staff would have been deemed sufficiently trained to completely take over the work. This was the same day that the incident involving Mr Rowlands happened, although the work hadn't been officially handed over when it occurred.

'The incident itself happened during the mixing of the refractory cement. Tata had a large industrial cement mixer – these are large vertical pieces of industrial equipment, where, after mixing, the cement is dropped out of the bottom into a skip. On the day of the incident, Monolithic staff had gone to mix a batch of cement with this machine. They went to operate the cement mixer's actuated door, but it was jammed.

'Having seen the practice that Tata staff had used to unjam the door, they tried to replicate it by flicking the mixer door's open/close switch, then hitting the mixer door with a hard object to free it. In this case, they used a scaffolding pole. Unfortunately, the mixer was still running, so when the door opened slightly, the pole went into the mixer. The pole was then thrown around at great speed and exited the machine, hitting Monolithic worker Gavin, who was by the door switch at the side of the mixer.

'The pole struck Gavin on the side of the head, breaking his jaw, and throwing him to the floor. Gavin was very seriously injured: he was in hospital and recovery for a significant time afterwards. Fortunately, Gavin made an excellent recovery although he did suffer a permanent brain injury. However, it was simply luck that meant that the outcome was not far more serious.'

On 5 July 2023, at Swansea Crown Court, Tata Steel UK Limited pleaded guilty to breaching sections 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act. The company was fined £120,000 and ordered to pay £14,138 in costs.

OTHER GOVERNMENT NEWS

[On 24 July, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Michael Gove, made a number of announcements relating to building safety as part of his speech on the government's long-term plan for housing.](#)

Mr Gove confirmed the intention to mandate second staircases in new residential buildings above 18 metres, following confirmation from expert bodies that they support this threshold.

It was also announced that the Cladding Safety Scheme is open for residential buildings over 11 metres in height, ensuring that no leaseholder will be out of pocket to fix dangerous cladding in medium or high-rise buildings.

- [Read the announcements in full](#)
- [View the Cladding Safety Scheme overview](#)



ARE YOU WORKING SAFELY WITH DSE?

All employers must protect workers from the health risks of working with display screen equipment (DSE).

Incorrect use of DSE or poorly designed workstations or work environments can lead to pain in necks, shoulders, backs, arms, wrists and hands, as well as fatigue and eye strain.



[Our guidance](#) covers a range of topics including:

- workstations and assessments
- work routine and breaks
- eyesight testing

There are also accessible resources including our [DSE workstation checklist](#) and practical tips on maintaining a [good posture](#).

In addition, we have guidance on what employers and workers need to know about [working with DSE from home](#). This includes a video with basic advice on how to maintain a good posture, both at home and in the office.

BUILDING CONTROL – SECONDARY LEGISLATION & NEW GUIDANCE UPDATE



The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has published a suite of secondary legislation which applies to the new building control framework.

The following regulations will come into force on 1 October 2023:

- [The Building \(Higher-Risk Buildings Procedures\) \(England\) Regulations 2023](#)
- [The Building Regulations etc. \(Amendment\) \(England\) Regulations 2023](#)
- [The Building \(Approved Inspectors etc. and Review of Decisions\) \(England\) Regulations 2023](#)

To help navigate the legislation and support the new building control approval process for higher-risk buildings we have developed some [new guidance which can be found here](#).

The government has also published the following consultation response on changes to the building control profession and building control process for approved inspectors:

- [Consultation outcome on changes to the building control profession and the building control process for approved inspectors](#)

WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY

World Suicide Prevention Day is on 10th September each year to promote worldwide action to prevent suicides

Various events and activities are held during this occasion to raise awareness that suicide is a major preventable cause of premature death. At St John Ambulance they have launched two Suicide First Aid courses that give learners the knowledge, tools and confidence to help someone with thoughts of suicide.



You can find out more about the two courses below and take our free online [Suicide and Empathy online module here](#).

- Suicide First Aid: Understanding Suicide Interventions - 1 Day
This course will give learners a thorough understanding of suicide, how to recognise when someone is considering suicide, how to intervene to prevent suicide and how to implement a suicide safety plan.

[Find out more and book a course >>](#)

- Suicide First Aid Lite - Half Day

This course provides learners with a basic understanding of how someone might come to think about suicide, signs to look out for, and how to keep someone safe who is considering suicide.

[Find out more and book a course >>](#)

ELECTRICAL HAZARD PROTECTIVE FOOTWEAR

HSE has been made aware of a potential issue regarding the testing of boots to an American Standard; ASTM F2412-18A.

The ASTM Standard contains a single test procedure representative of a very restricted working environment. In many cases, these limitations have not been made clear on the packaging or the product instructions. This may result in the wearer believing the product has been tested to protect them in circumstances where it doesn't.

Footwear tested to this Standard is **NOT SUITABLE** for live electrical working. These may be suitable for use in environments where there is potential for accidental exposure to alternating current (AC) voltages not exceeding 600V AC.

Footwear tested to this Standard has not been tested against direct current (DC) voltages.

The Standard does not include tests for use in wet or damp environments and therefore the footwear should not also be marked to offer claims of waterproof, Water resistant, water resistant upper, or other similar claims.

The footwear will not offer protection from electric shock if the outer sole has been penetrated by a nail or other sharp object and therefore should not be marked with claims of penetration/perforation resistance.

The Standard does not test the upper of the product and therefore may not be suitable for use where there is a risk of direct ground contact, "earthing" of the upper, such as: soft loose ground, (gravel, sand, soil, grass or mud), ladders, steps and gantries.

Regulation 2016/425 which relates to the design and manufacture of PPE requires that any PPE that claims protection against electrical shock should be regarded as a Category III item and requires independent ongoing quality assurance of production control by an approved/notified body.



You should check the Declaration of Conformity that accompanies the footwear to ensure it has been subjected to the third party approved/notified body assessment required for Category III PPE.

The footwear will be marked with 4 digit number next to the UKCA/CE mark identifying the approved/notified body responsible for ongoing production control.

If you provide electrical hazard protective footwear to your workers, you should revisit any relevant risk assessments to check that it is suitable for the purposes it is being provided.

Additional guidance:

- [Office for Product Safety & Standards guidance](#)
- [Check the approved body](#)
- [British Safety Industry Federation](#)

FACE FIT TESTING LEGAL REQUIREMENT



[AGA have 6 fully qualified Face Fit Testers ready to come to your site.](#)

Where respiratory protective equipment (RPE) is used as a control measure under Health and Safety Legislation, it is vital that the selected RPE is adequate and suitable. RPE must reduce exposure to as low as reasonably practicable, and in any case to an acceptable level (e.g., below any applicable Workplace Exposure Limits or Control Limits).

To ensure that the selected RPE has the potential to provide adequate protection for individual wearers, the ACoPs supporting COSHH, CAR and CLAW stipulate that tight-fitting RPE must be fit tested as part of the selection process. This will help to ensure that inadequately fitting facepieces are not selected for use. Ill-fitting facepieces can create inward leakages of airborne contaminants.

AGA can advise you on:

- The different types of RPE available
- The different grades of RPE and how to understand what the right RPE for the task is.
- The different exposure hazards and ill health from working with wood, silica and construction dust.
- The law and requirements for RPE use.
- How to correctly fit RPE

We can then test the face fit of RPE on your operatives using our testing kit and provide certification for each operative.

FREE CDM ADVICE

Continued Professional Development for all.

Do you need help understanding the CDM Regulations 2015? Not sure if you are complying with your duties correctly?

We offer a free CPD consultation to keep you up to date. One of our experienced CDM Consultants will host a virtual session and provide up-to-the-minute, competent advice. We cover everything from Duty Holders to Design Risk Management and welcome any questions or scenarios you need help with.

Please get in touch if this would be of interest to you info@aga-ltd.co.uk

AGA E-LEARNING COURSES

Whether you are looking to improve your own knowledge or provide training to employees, our E-Learning courses will guide you through the regulations, your legal duties, identifying hazards in your workplace and suitable control measures. Each course is followed by a short test to clarify your understanding regarding that topic, upon which, after completion, you will be issued a certificate.

The courses we currently offer training in are:

- [IOSH Working Safely \(£90 + VAT Per Person Per Course\)](#)
- [Abrasive Wheels](#)
- [Basic First Aid](#)
- [Basic Ladder Awareness](#)
- [Confined Space Awareness](#)
- [COSHH](#)
- [Defibrillator Awareness](#)
- [Display Screen Equipment \(DSE\)](#)
- [Environmental Safety](#)
- [Falls prevention – working at Height](#)
- [Fire Safety](#)
- [Fire Warden](#)
- [Health and Safety Level 2](#)
- [Infection Prevention and Control \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Legionella Awareness](#)
- [Local Exhaust Ventilation \(LEV\)](#)
- [Lone and Remote Workers \(Personal security\)](#)
- [Manual Handling](#)
- [Mental Health Awareness](#)
- [Noise](#)
- [Office Safety](#)
- [Risk Assessment](#)
- [Slips and Trips](#)
- [The Construction \(Design and Management\) Regulations \(Overview\)](#)
- [The Construction \(Design and Management\) Regulations \(The Client\)](#)
- [The Construction \(Design and Management\) Regulations \(The Principal Contractor and Contractors\)](#)
- [The Construction \(Design and Management\) Regulations \(The Principal Designer and Designers\)](#)
- [CPD Asbestos Awareness](#)
- [Vibration \(HAVS\)](#)



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