



UNSAFE WORKING AT HEIGHT

OVERVIEW

On 20th April 2026 whilst installing a roof on a scaffold, a two-man team were observed working at height without the appropriate edge protection and although they were both wearing their harnesses, it is not clear whether either of them were attached to an anchor point.

The facts are being established, and a full investigation will be taking place in due course.

Without prejudice to the investigation, this alert is to serve as a reminder of the relevant safe working practices when working at height.



DETAIL

In advance of installing a new 132kV cable and completing the associated termination works of the cable sealing ends, it was deemed necessary to install a scaffold with a safe working platform within the ex-Neasden bay at Willesden Grid.

During the final assembly of the roof of the scaffold, a two-man sub-contract scaffolding team were observed working at height without the appropriate edge protection. It was also observed that although they were both wearing their harnesses, it is not clear whether either of them were attached to an anchor point.

In addition, it was noted that there was no safe means of access or egress to and from the top section of the scaffold. The team were stood down; the area was made safe and the works were stopped until further notice.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

Refer to HSS 01 067 – Working at Height

Avoidance of Working at Height by Design

- Designers must review the requirements for working at height as part of the design process and they must ensure that the requirement to work at height during construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning is removed so far as is reasonably practicable.
- If working at height is necessary, the design must ensure good access and egress is afforded.
- The justification for retaining the need to work at height and the design provisions put in place to ensure appropriate protection must be documented as part of the design risk assessment.

Note - It is important to follow an approved design and equally important to challenge any design, where you have a safety concern.

Putting People to Work

Those putting people to work must ensure that the individuals have:

- appropriate skills, knowledge, attitude, training and Competency.
- appropriate Working at Height Equipment, temporary structures and Personal Fall Protection Equipment which is used correctly.

Note - Collective measures, such as guardrails and safety nets are vital when working at height because they provide protection for everyone on site, not just individual workers. By prioritising collective controls, the risk of accidents is significantly reduced, ensuring a safer environment for all rather than relying solely on personal protective equipment.

A Very Serious Incident investigation is being led by Mark Adolphus and learning points into the incident will be published in due course.

Page intentionally blank apart from the table at the bottom of the page.

Primary communication via Line Manager complete by (X)	X	2 calendar days		5 calendar days		10 calendar days
Additional communication (X)		Stand down briefing		1 st 15		Team Brief slide
Line management must ensure appropriate employees understand the content of this document within the timescale shown. This document is subject to compliance audits after the communication deadline.						