



Safety Advice (58-2014) (August) (NZ)

The quoted message below was emailed to the EEA courtesy of Ravi Kollouru at WEL.

This EEA Safety Advice contains the link to demonstration and discussion about the issue of roof/wall anchorages having insufficient strength for purpose. The EEA advises parties having responsibility for installing/using such anchorages to arrange engineering assessment where there may be any reasonable doubt about integrity or fitness for purpose of surface mounted anchorages.

The link to the Australian web site is:

<http://www.waha.org.au/articles.html>

And the quoted message from Ravi Kolluru at WEL:

“Anchor bolt warning”

A height safety expert has asked WorkSafe NZ to urgently investigate installation standards for roof anchor bolts after Australian tests found some bolts tore from the roof when subjected to sudden stress equivalent to the fall arrest of a harnessed worker.

Hawke's Bay roof anchor consultant Nick Collins says Australia's Working at Height Association (WAHA) has issued a safety alert and called for urgent action from regulators after a series of tests, conducted in accordance with the new joint standard - AS/NZS 5532:2013 *Manufacturing requirements for single-point anchor device used for harness-based work at height* - found a number of products failed, ripping through roofing iron and dropping the harnessed load to the ground.

"These were anchors installed in full accordance with manufacturers' instructions, and tested in a laboratory accredited by Australia's National Association of Testing Authorities," Collins says. "The alarming conclusion is that, while the anchors themselves may be able to sustain the loads prescribed in the standard, the combination of anchor and roof sheet substrate can result in catastrophic failure."

The New Zealand industry needs to be concerned, he says, because the roof sheeting used here is similar to, or thinner than, the equivalent Australian product. "There are thousands of these types of anchors on New Zealand buildings, and if somebody has a fall there's going to be a body on the ground. People are relying on stuff that could cause a death. "

In June WAHA warned Australian manufacturers that all anchor systems should be taken out of commission until both the bolts, and the substrate on which they are



mounted, can be tested and approved. Collins, a member of WAHA, has been discussing the matter with WorkSafe and believes the agency's technical team leader is planning a meeting for all interested parties to decide what action is needed.

"The way these things are installed needs to be addressed because it is quite a technical area. If you're a builder, a sparky or a plumber you've got to be registered before you can get work, but when it comes to height safety, where people's lives depend on the safety systems you set up, you don't have to be registered. Anyone with a credit card, a hacksaw and a screw driver can set himself up as a height safety specialist."

Regards

Ravi

Ravi Kolluru | Senior Health and Safety Specialist

DDI +64 7 850 3175 | MOB +64 27 296 9807 | WEB www.wel.co.nz