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Head of Operations (Scotland,
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Date July 2006

Dear Sirs

**HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK ETC ACT 1974
WORK AT HEIGHT REGULATIONS 2005
SCAFFOLDING ISSUES**

Following two major scaffold collapses in Edinburgh and a subsequent collapse in Kilmarnock, which is currently under investigation, HSE Inspectors across Scotland have carried out a considerable number of site visits to discuss scaffolding issues. In addition a number of events have been held to further raise awareness within the industry, namely: Scaffolding Safety and Health Awareness Days in Edinburgh and Dundee and advisory events in the West and North of Scotland.

However during inspections we are continuing to find sub-standard scaffolds erected and inspected by personnel with inadequate training, experience and skills to execute their roles competently. Many of the scaffolds should have been designed but were not.

As a competent scaffold contractor you are required to provide a suitable stable working platform that has been erected by competent personnel. It is important that you have in place arrangements to ensure this, and that these arrangements are reviewed regularly and take into account the following factors, and any others you deem appropriate:

- Scaffold design;
- Duty rating and actual imposed loadings on scaffolds, particularly wind loading when scaffolds are clad with debris netting or sheeting;
- Arrangements for stabilising scaffolds, e.g. ties, buttresses, etc.;
- Risk of impact by construction plant or vehicles;
- Frequency and thoroughness of scaffold inspection arrangements;
- Selection and testing of scaffold ties;
- Permit application procedures, where appropriate;
- Public protection;
- Systems in place for the handover of new or adapted scaffolds;

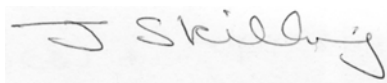
- Training and competence of scaffold erectors;
- Adequacy of scaffold foundations;
- Prevention of unauthorised modifications.

The enclosed information sheet has been produced following consultation with CITB, NASC and SA-FE (Safe Access- Fall Elimination). It gives additional guidance on the appropriate standards that HSE expects in relation to scaffold operations particularly in relation to design issues and training requirements.


We would ask that you consider these issues and ensure that you have in place sufficiently robust arrangements to demonstrate compliance with the required standards.

We will be raising these matters through a series of Head Office visits in the near future, however should you wish to discuss any aspect of this with us please do not hesitate to do so.

Yours faithfully



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SCAFFOLD INFORMATION SHEET

Design Issues

- All tube and fitting should be designed by a competent person, unless a 'basic scaffold'.
- System scaffolding should be designed and erected in accordance with the manufacturers or suppliers Handbook.
- Any proposed modifications, or alterations, outwith a system scaffolding manufacturers guidelines should be designed by a competent person.
- Erection of designed scaffolding should be done under the direct supervision of an advanced scaffolder.
- Handover certificates should refer to any relevant design drawings.
- Inspection of designed scaffolding should be carried out by a competent person.
- Scaffolding should be 'tagged' to indicate when they are not in use.

Competence Issues

- Supervisors should be qualified to advanced scaffolder level.
- All employees should be competent for the type of scaffolding work they are undertaking and should have received appropriate training relevant to the system they are working on.
- Appropriate levels of supervision should be provided.
- Scaffold inspections should be conducted by an appropriately qualified person.
- Scaffold register should note defects and corrective actions taken.
- Appropriate qualifications may include:
 1. Construction Industry Scaffolders Record Scheme (CISRS).
 2. Relevant manufacturers training.
 3. Proposed CITB/NASC courses for system scaffolding and Limited Skills.
 4. Proposed SA-FE (Safe Access-Fall Elimination) system courses.

Further guidance is available on:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/scaffolding.htm>

SCAFFOLD STRUCTURES THAT REQUIRE TO BE DESIGNED

1. DEAD SHORES
2. FLYING SHORES
3. RAKING SHORES
4. CANTILIVERED SCAFFOLDS
5. FAÇADE RETENTION
6. ACCESS SCAFFOLDS WITH MULTIPLE WORKING LIFTS
7. BUTTRESSED FREE-STANDING SCAFFOLDS
8. TEMPORARY ROOFS AND TEMPORARY BUILDINGS
9. SUPPORT SCAFFOLDS
10. LOADING GANTRIES
11. MOBILE AND STATIC TOWERS OUTWITH BASE/HEIGHT LIMITATIONS
12. FREE STANDING SCAFFOLDS OUT WITH BASE/HEIGHT LIMITATIONS
13. HEAVY DUTY RAMPS
14. PUBLIC ACCESS STANDS, STAIRCASES AND FIRE ESCAPES
15. PAVEMENT GANTRIES
16. BRIDGE SCAFFOLDS
17. TOWERS REQUIRING GUYS OR GROUND ANCHORS
18. OFFSHORE SCAFFOLDS OUT WITH OCA HANDBOOK
19. PEDESTRIAN FOOTBRIDGES OR WALKWAYS
20. SUSPENDED SCAFFOLDS
21. HEAVY DUTY FANS
22. MARINE SCAFFOLDS
23. BOILER SCAFFOLDS
24. POWER LINE CROSSINGS
25. LIFTING GANTRIES AND TOWERS
26. STEEPLE SCAFFOLDS
27. SYSTEM SCAFFOLDS OUTWITH USERS GUIDE PARAMETERS
28. SIGN BOARD SUPPORTS
29. SEALING END STRUCTURES
30. ADVERTISING HOARDINGS/BANNERS
31. ANY SCAFFOLD STRUCTURE SUBJECT TO:
 - a. Vibration
 - b. High Loading
 - c. Long term duration
 - d. High risk areas
 - e. Loading from passenger/goods hoists

Note: The above list is not exhaustive and any scaffold that does not comply with manufacturers guidelines as published in handbooks will require a specific design produced by a competent person.