

## Slips, Trips and Falls

Slips, trips and falls continue to be the single largest category of accident for IP and S&E. Statistics show that these accidents are not confined to any particular time of year—but for obvious reasons they peak around the winter months.

### Period 11 RIDDORS

At approximately 5.00am on Sunday 15th January, a person working for MDA Rail on the Bletchley Project was climbing out of the cab of a works train. As he did so, he slipped and fell, breaking his ankle in 2 places, displacing a bone and also fractured his shin. His injuries are such that he will require complex surgery and will not be able to work for around 6 months. This only goes to show how a simple low risk activity can lead to a serious injury.

At 12.45hrs on 17th Jan, a work gang employed by Buckingham Group Contracting Ltd were employed to remove a redundant location base between Faversham Station and St Annes (50m x 20ch). During the task, a sub contractor employed by TXM Infrastructure Ltd was lifting/swinging a sledge hammer in order to break the base when he slipped on clay balls which had been in situ to assist in drainage of the area. As a result of the slip, the IP felt pain in his left knee and observed some swelling. At hospital, the IP was diagnosed as having torn ligaments in his left knee—he was treated and booked a further appointment on 24th Jan and told to rest until that date.

### Period 10 Slips, Trips & Falls

IP Tripped in CESS—twisted ankle  
 IP Slipped in 4ft—grazed knee and face  
 IP Slipped down rabbit hole—leg injury  
 IP Tripped in 4ft—shoulder injury  
 IP Slipped in icy conditions—leg injury  
 IP Slipped on edge of excavation—ankle injury

### Remember:

Wear appropriate footwear.  
 Look where your next step will be.  
 Maintain a 3 point contact when climbing/descending steps.  
 Slow down in icy or slippery conditions.  
 Step over not onto obstacles.  
 At night use a torch.  
 Immediately report all hazards that have the potential to cause harm.

## Tower Scaffold Collapse Risk

There has been a recent failure of Glass reinforced Plastic (GRP) mobile tower scaffolding. This follows on from an alert issued last year with a similar type of mobile tower fault being identified, which can cause collapse of the tower and poses a serious risk to those on and around such scaffolding. The previous alert (below) shows the defects. Checks must be made prior to use of the scaffold and where there are signs of wear or defects found the suspect equipment must be removed and quarantined.

A Glass reinforced Plastic (GRP) tower scaffold partially collapsed whilst two operatives were standing on one of its platforms. Fortunately, only very minor injuries were sustained (grazing to the arm of one of the operatives). Two 'tee joints' supporting the platform failed, leading to the platform dropping approximately 0.5 metres, at a 25 degree angle. Inspection by the manufacturer identified no manufacturing fault. However, a number of issues have been highlighted from the ongoing investigations including:

- Method of erecting was not to manufacturer's guidance.
- Records of component part checks were not available.
- Visible signs of wear and tear including numerous cuts, scuffs, abrasions on the GRP component parts.

It was also highlighted that not all manufacturers identify a recommended life expectancy for this type of equipment.



Duty holders are reminded that they must:

- Ensure that appropriate risk based regimes are in place to inspect work at height equipment, including component parts in compliance with the Work at Height Regulations.
- Erecting of scaffold to be undertaken in accordance with manufacturers guidance.
- Ensure that those staff who are required to undertake inspections are competent to do so.
- Ensure that employees who are required to undertake inspections do so using the manufacturer's guidance.