

FALL PROTECTION FOR TOWER CRANES

This alert has been generated to ensure that all sites in Victoria are aware of the compliance requirements for accessing tower cranes.

This alert is based on Worksafe's June 2013 alert after a number of tower cranes were identified as having inadequate fall protection.

The Principle contractor and other employers must provide employees and contractors with the highest level of fall protection that is reasonably practicable, and provide guardrails for perimeter fall protection for tower cranes.

Guardrails complying with the default heights given in AS 1657 includes fixed platforms, walkways, stairways and ladders. Design, construction and installation may not fully control all crane machine deck fall risks. The fall risks must be assessed for all persons and those installing temporary wiring/lighting on the crane.

CONTROL MEASURES

Review the effectiveness of guardrails in providing fall protection on existing tower cranes. This should include identifying all external and internal fall risks associated with accessing the tower crane and crane deck, operations consulting with employees, health and safety representatives (HSRs) and other relevant stakeholders.

DURING RECTIFICATION WORKS

If your tower crane is out of service, ensure it is not returned to service until the fall risks have been effectively controlled. If your tower crane is in use and the fall protection doesn't effectively control the fall risks, implement adequate interim fall protection controls, based on the falls hierarchy of control until permanent rectification works can be made.

Normally, rectifications will occur when the crane is disassembled and taken out of service.

The interim controls must be documented in the safe work method statement (SWMS) for each task where the interim controls must be used.

LIGHTING ON TOWER CRANES

When considering lighting levels to safely access the crane, or do other work, the principles within AS/NZS 3012 must be followed. That is 20 Lux emergency battery back-up lighting and 40 Lux access light to be installed.

For further information, see Compliance Code – Prevention of falls in general construction. AS 1657 – Fixed platforms, walkways, stairways and ladders – Design, construction and installation.

It is the recommendation of the ETU that if any of the above steps are not followed, work **should cease**.

Contact your designated Health & Safety representative, your local organiser or your Union OH&S officer.

