

Falls from vehicles – toolbox talk for construction workers

What is this about?

- There are over 2000 'Falls from vehicle' accidents reported to HSE each year
- These include on average 5 fatalities each year
- Major injuries are usually broken arms or legs, resulting in weeks off work

Construction specific info.

- In construction 70% of these accidents occur to **non-drivers**
- 90% are low falls, below head height
- They occur during off loading of materials or when getting on or off the vehicle
- In construction the falls mostly occur from the load area of flatbeds, HGV's & vans

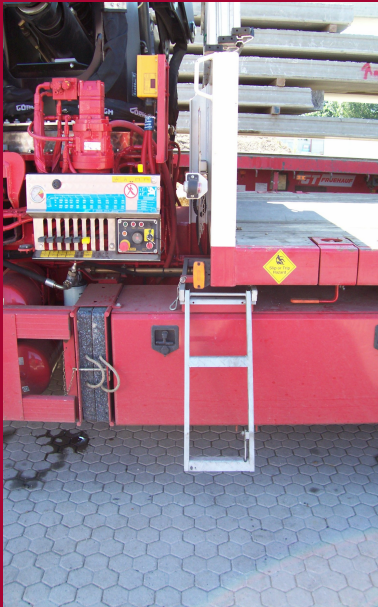
What are we looking at?

- Alternatives to working on vehicles
- Safe access to and from vehicle beds
- Safer working practices
- What the company/ies can do
- What the operative/worker can do

Work at height hierarchy

- **AVOID** work at height on the load area. Use automatic sheeting devices or a fork lift truck for off loading where possible.
- **PREVENT** anyone falling whilst working on the load area by using vehicle fitted edge protection or loading gantries for example.
- **MINIMISE** any injury should a fall occur by using soft landing systems, nets & airbags.

Getting on to the load area



- Only get onto the load area if no other alternative
- Always use the steps and hand-hold provided
- Do not use the “underrun bars”, these are usually set in and slippery

On the load area



- Keep it tidy – pick up loose ropes, packaging etc.
- Keep it clean, free of mud/oil that cause slips and trips
- Report broken boards and other tripping hazards
- Follow any company procedures

Getting down from the load area



- **DON'T** jump off the load area
- Always use the steps or access equipment which is provided
- Get down backwards, facing the vehicle and using the handhold
- If there are problems, report them to your supervisor
- Keep the area clean

‘Special’ equipment e.g.

- Tail-lifts
- Tower and mobile cranes
- Lorry-loader cranes
- Fork-lift trucks
- Fall prevention systems - gantries
- Soft landing systems – nets, air/bean bags

What the company can do

- Specify good access when purchasing new vehicles
- Retro-fit equipment if necessary
- Respond to ideas for improving access
- Keep equipment in good order
- Provide slip resistant footwear
- Ensure supervisors check how people are getting on and off vehicles



What the employee can do

- Take a few seconds to climb down facing the vehicle – **DON'T** jump
- Report missing or damaged equipment
- Report slip, trip and fall hazards
- Wear correct footwear
- Look at what other companies do - if you see a good idea, suggest it to your Safety Adviser
- Any ideas NOW?