

STOP AND THINK TALK

A briefing tool for managers

THE COST OF AN ACCIDENT

A simple slip on a few steps can result in a very serious injury

A truckmixer driver fell down the steps from the batching cabin. He had heard a loud bang, similar to a tyre exploding, and therefore went out of the cabin to take a look. He fell to the floor suffering a compound fracture to the left ankle.

The injury resulted in him being off work for almost 3 months, and having to employ a replacement driver to operate his mixer.



DRIVER TRIPPED ON UNEVEN GROUND

A truckmixer driver arrived at his base plant and parked his vehicle in the usual place prior to loading. As he descended from his vehicle, he placed his right foot on the edge of a slightly raised concrete patch. This motion caused him to go over on his ankle and then fall to the floor. After mentioning the incident to a fellow driver he continued to work until the end of the day. Later that evening he went to his local A&E Hospital

where his ankle and foot were X-rayed, revealing a fractured bone in his right foot. After treatment, the injured foot was placed in a compression boot and he was discharged .

At the time of the incident, the driver had been wearing a rigger type wellington (see below) which did not offer sufficient ankle protection – ground conditions were dry. A lace up safety boot may have reduced the severity of the injury. From the incident investigation it is believed that the driver generally missed out the top and bottom steps when entering / leaving his cab."



Portable Ladder Used by Vessel



Top of Access Ladder

SAFE MEAN OF ACCESS

An employee on a ship suffered a broken wrist when he slipped and stumbled on a portable ladder.

The vessel was discharging cargo at a wharf and one of the crew went ashore to go to a local supermarket.

On returning, he climbed a portable access ladder in order to board the vessel; he was carrying a plastic bag containing his shopping. He placed his arm through the handles of the bag and climbed the ladder using the handrails. On reaching the top, as he stepped down onto the deck he slipped and lost his balance. In attempting to break his fall with his left arm, he fractured a bone in his wrist.

Incorrect means of access were in place, the vessel's gangway should have been deployed and not the portable ladder; however since the ladder was used, it should have been attended.

At the time of the incident, the ladder was at an angle of approx 30 ° due to the falling tide. This should have been regularly checked and re-adjusted to accommodate the changes in level

It had also been raining, and therefore the steps and the deck were slippery.



STOP AND THINK TALK



GET A GRIP

Preparation

This stop and think talk can be used individually or with a group. It could be delivered in the vicinity of a vehicle, mobile plant or steps & stairways to enable wider discussion of other issues, taking care that the area is isolated from traffic and people can hear what you are saying. Participants should receive a copy of the talk for their CPD files as well as signing the training declaration.

Introduction (After reading out the case studies)

There have been several lost time incidents resulting from failure to enter / leave workplaces and vehicles safely. Whilst each of these incidents had different factors involved they all had a common theme – an injury caused by a slip, trip or fall. These events highlight the need for employees to ensure they always adopt 3 points of contact, take care when stepping down and also ensure that housekeeping maintains a clean & tidy work area to avoid trip hazards

THE TALK

Use the questions below to open the discussion under each heading and then go through the lists explaining in detail each hazard / control and what is expected

Hazards

Question 1 – What are the hazards/factors which contribute to incidents associated with stairs and steps?

- Haste / shortcut – running / missing a step
- No handrail or not using the handrail(s)
- Shoes dirty / greasy / worn tread
- Poor lighting
- Poor housekeeping- articles left/ stored on stairways
- Footwear not offering sufficient ankle protection
- Stepping down onto uneven or soft ground
- Stepping onto objects
- Worn/slippery steps
- Not using correct means of access
- Carrying tools/equipment/mobile phones or coffee mugs whilst going up and down stairs
- Complacency – I've been up and down these steps for the past 20 years, 20 times a day

Controls

Question 2 – What are the controls of these hazards

- Do not rush, run or miss steps - they have been designed for your safety
- Challenge anyone not holding a handrail
- Complete a hazard alert card for stairs which are missing a handrail
- Ensure the wearing of lace-up safety boots on operational sites - rigger boots and other pull on boots to not offer sufficient ankle protection
- Ensure that boots are clean, free from dirt & grease and in a good condition?
- Use the principles of 'MYSPACE' when stepping down – what can hurt me? Check for uneven ground or stepping onto objects and equipment. What is the housekeeping like on your site?
- Avoid carrying anything whilst going up/downsteps

Controls cont

- Look out for and challenge unsafe behaviours.
- Only use equipment / steps which are fit for purpose – do not stand on a chair to reach on top of the cupboard, do not stand on the wheel arch on a vehicle

Question 3 – What additional controls can be used to raise awareness

- Use 'Get A Grip' stickers or signs on high risk areas to raise awareness
- Ant-Slip Paint – particularly to highlight heavily trafficked areas, changes in direction or changes in level



- Grating Anti Slip Grips – to offer additional grip on worn or polished gratings. These are simple to install and good idea to fit on where there is a greater potential for slips, and falls



AND FINALLY.....

1. Clarify any points as required
2. Ask if there are any other safety related issues that should be discussed
3. Thank everyone for their participation

