



STERLING

**COMPLYING WITH
WORK AT HEIGHT
REGULATIONS ON
TRUCKS.**



The Higher Standard.

SO, HOW DOES THE LAW DEFINE WORKING AT HEIGHT?

A definition from the HSE.

Work at height means work in any place where, if precautions were not taken, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury.

So, HSE says that you are working at height if you:

- work above ground/floor level could fall from an edge, through an opening or fragile surface or,

- could fall from ground level into an opening in a floor or a hole in the ground.

This may seem extreme, you may well say 'I could call anything a work at height fall!' but it goes on to clarify that work at height does **not** include a slip or a

trip on the level, as a fall from height has to involve a fall from one level to a lower level, nor does it include walking up and down a permanent staircase in a building.

We sometimes complain about the measures that health and safety have gone to, and we may think they have gone to far but it's important to go back to where this all originated from.

Look at historic structures such as medieval cathedrals or pyramids and it's clear that working at height has been carried out for centuries. Fatalities were incredibly high, because unskilled workers were given inadequate tools and trail and error methods.

Through out the industrial revolution and even when skyscrapers were

built in our cities, no laws for working at height were introduced. Not until 1974.

The laws were designed to regulate health and safety giving the employer the responsibility of ensuring the welfare of their employees.

Since then, fatalities have drastically decreased by 86% as of 2015. As modern technology advances, equipment for working at height is reducing the risk.

| Type of Accident | 2017 |
|-------------------------------|------|
| Falls from height | 40 |
| Struck by vehicle | 25 |
| Struck by object | 17 |
| Contact with moving machinery | 13 |

WORKING AT HEIGHT FATALITIES HAVE DECREASED BY 86%



FAILURE TO ASSESS RISKS MAY RESULT IN EMPLOYEE DEATH.

WHAT ARE YOUR REQUIREMENTS AS AN EMPLOYER?

Each and every regulation. Especially those where there is risk of a fall liable to cause personal injury.

Placing the duty on employers and those who control any work at height activity (such as facilities managers or building owners who may contract others to work at height), you must ensure:

- All work at height is properly planned and organised those involved in work at height are competent.
- The risks from work at height are assessed, and appropriate work equipment is selected and used.
- The risks of working on or near fragile surfaces are properly managed.
- The equipment used for work at height is properly inspected and maintained.

However, not all the responsibility is on the employer. It is just as important that employees recognise they have general legal

duties to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may well be affected by their actions. They must cooperate with their employer to enable their health and safety duties and requirements to be complied with.

The consequences of not taking work at height seriously is clear. Potential serious injury should be enough to make sure all precautions are taken.

However, this year substantial fines were handed out to companies who came in breach of the regulations. In one particular case prison sentences were given to directors in 2016 who were not managing work at height risks appropriately.

HOW DO I PREVENT FALLS WHEN USING TRUCKS?

Here are some examples.

Whilst edge protection is not stipulated by the law, many of our customers choose to specify it on their trucks. Fall restraints, which run along the sides of the body, come in two ways; fold out walkway or a removeable post and socket handrails.

Fold out walkways enable the operator to walk safely beside machines on the truck compared to post and socket handrails which are removeable if there are larger machines being transported.

Illuminating the truck body is crucial to making sure your operator doesn't misplace their foot and fall when working in the dark. At Sterling, rear corner beacons and LED work lights on the headboard come as standard, because safety is so paramount to us.

Make sure your deck is specified to suit the machinery you are transporting! Choosing the right deck means that your machinery is less likely to slip and cause harm to the operator.

Another safety feature Sterling includes is the access ladder. The ladder is situated to give easy and safe access to the truck body, in order to load and unload the machinery. This means the operator is provided with a safe route instead of climbing onto the body through handrails.

Last but definitely not least, the loading angle of the ramp is very important. The shallower the loading angle, the safer it is for the operator when coming down the slope, as there is less risk of them being thrown from the machinery.





ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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