



LESSONS LEARNT FALL FROM ALLOY TOWER



1

BACKGROUND

On 14 August 2026 at approximately 13:40, an apprentice electrician fell when a MiTOWER mobile access tower overturned during CCTV conduit installation in the ground-floor commercial unit.

The injured person sustained a closed fracture to his right radius. The incident was RIDDOR reportable and could have resulted in a significantly more serious injury.

2

INCIDENT

The injured person was working from the tower platform at approximately **1.8 metres** while a second apprentice remained at ground level.

As an SDS drill was passed down, the tower lifted onto two wheels/legs and overturned. The injured person fell onto the solid slab below.

3

IMMEDIATE / DIRECT CAUSE

Loss of tower stability and overturning during the task.

All four stabilisers/outriggers required by the manufacturer's instructions were not fitted.

The missing stabilisers materially reduced the tower's effective base and resistance to overturning.

4

CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

No traceable record confirmed who erected or checked the tower.

No completed tower-specific inspection or visible tag was evidenced before use.

The available **PASMA-trained manager** did not verify the tower configuration before use.

The Daily Activity Briefing did not provide a sufficiently task-specific check of the access equipment.

Written controls were not converted into a positively verified working arrangement.

5

KEY LESSONS

Mobile towers must be erected and used by competent persons in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Every required stabiliser must be fitted and all castors locked before use.

A current tower tag and recorded pre-use inspection must be in place before anyone works from the platform.

Supervisors must positively verify access equipment, competence and the work-at-height arrangement before work starts.

Task-specific briefings must identify the selected access equipment and required controls before work starts.

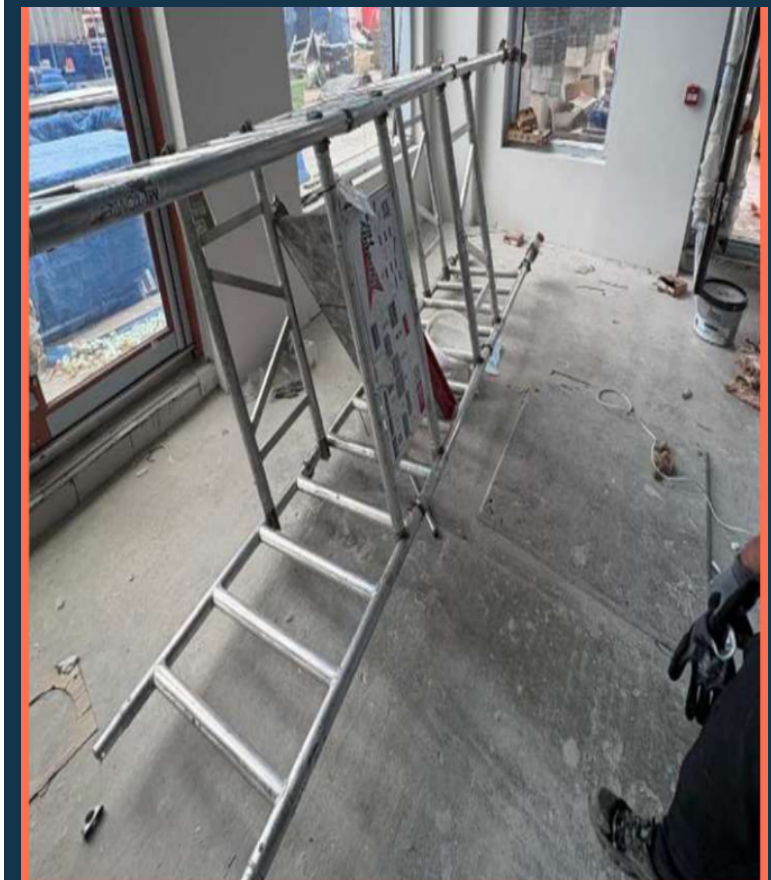
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MANAGEMENT LEARNING

The Site Manager had three opportunities to check the tower - at the start of the shift, during the work and before completion - but did not identify the missing stabilisers.

The trained Site Manager did not verify that the tower had been erected in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions before work started.

Available PASMA competence was not used to positively verify the tower configuration before use.



PANEL HANDLING

Illustrative training scenario - not an actual IPS incident

1 BACKGROUND

Large boards and panels can be awkward, unstable and difficult to grip. Plan delivery, storage and movement before the task.

2 SCENARIO

Training example: two workers begin carrying a large panel across an obstructed route. The load blocks their view and one worker starts to lose their grip.

3 IMMEDIATE RISK

Strains, trapped fingers and crushing injuries can result. Stop and lower the load safely; do not try to catch a falling panel.

4 CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

The weight and centre of gravity were not checked. The route was cluttered and the team had no agreed movement plan.

5 KEY CONTROLS

Avoid hazardous manual handling where possible. Use suitable mechanical aids and bring materials close to their point of use. Assess the load, task, people and surroundings. Keep routes clear.

6 SUPERVISOR CHECK

Confirm the handling method, suitable equipment and clear landing area. Brief the team and agree communication. Stop if conditions change; do not rely on a fixed “safe” lifting weight.

STOP • CHECK • ACT

Plan the move before lifting.

Briefing aid: apply the project risk assessment, method statement and manufacturer instructions.

HSE guidance: [construction/healthrisks/physical-ill-health-risks/manual-handling.htm](https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/healthrisks/physical-ill-health-risks/manual-handling.htm)

CUTTING MASONRY: SILICA DUST

Illustrative training scenario - not an actual IPS incident

1 BACKGROUND

Cutting paving blocks, kerbs or flags with a cut-off saw can release harmful respirable silica dust.

2 SCENARIO

Training example: a worker starts dry-cutting paving blocks beside an occupied walkway. Dust spreads to nearby trades.

3 IMMEDIATE RISK

Fine dust can damage lungs even when the job is brief. Stop uncontrolled cutting and keep others away.

4 CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

Cuts were not planned. Dust suppression was unavailable and nearby workers were not separated from the task.

5 KEY CONTROLS

Reduce cuts or use precut materials or a block splitter. Where sawing is necessary, use suitable water suppression or on-tool extraction. HSE specifies H or M class extraction and APF20 RPE for this task; tight-fitting masks need face-fit testing.

6 SUPERVISOR CHECK

Check controls operate correctly, the exclusion area is clear and RPE fits the wearer. Tight-fitting masks require a clean-shaven seal. Review the COSHH assessment and maintenance arrangements before restarting.

STOP • CHECK • ACT

Control dust at its source.

Briefing aid: apply the project risk assessment, method statement and manufacturer instructions.

HSE guidance: [construction/healthrisks/hazardous-substances/cutting-paving-blocks-kerbs-and-flags.htm](https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/healthrisks/hazardous-substances/cutting-paving-blocks-kerbs-and-flags.htm)

VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS

Illustrative training scenario - not an actual IPS incident

1 BACKGROUND

Deliveries and mobile plant can put workers and visitors at risk, especially where routes change during construction.

2 SCENARIO

Training example: a delivery vehicle begins reversing while a worker steps into its route to pass a stack of materials.

3 IMMEDIATE RISK

A person can be struck or crushed. Stop the movement and clear the area before any manoeuvre resumes.

4 CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

The walkway was blocked, the reversing area was not segregated and the visiting driver had not received clear instructions.

5 KEY CONTROLS

Separate people and vehicles with suitable routes and barriers. Keep walkways clear and provide visible crossings. Avoid reversing where possible through delivery planning and one-way routes.

6 SUPERVISOR CHECK

Brief drivers and workers on the traffic plan. Check lighting and visibility. Use trained, authorised signallers where required by the plan. Keep pedestrians outside the manoeuvring area; high-visibility clothing alone is not separation.

STOP • CHECK • ACT

**Keep people out of
vehicle routes.**

Briefing aid: apply the project risk assessment, method statement and manufacturer instructions.

HSE guidance: [construction/safetytopics/vehicledrivers.htm](https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/vehicledrivers.htm)

EXCAVATIONS AND TRENCH EDGES

Illustrative training scenario - not an actual IPS incident

1 BACKGROUND

Trenches may collapse or fill with water. People, spoil and vehicles can fall in or overload an edge.

2 SCENARIO

Training example: after heavy rain, a worker prepares to enter a trench with damaged support and spoil stored close to the edge.

3 IMMEDIATE RISK

Collapse can bury or crush a person. Keep people out, isolate the area and report the unsafe condition.

4 CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

Changed ground conditions were not reassessed. Edge loading increased and the support arrangement was not checked.

5 KEY CONTROLS

Plan suitable support or battering before digging. Identify services and protect nearby structures. Provide safe access, edge barriers and controls for water. Keep plant and spoil away from edges as determined by the assessment.

6 SUPERVISOR CHECK

A competent person must inspect supports or battering at the start of the shift and after events affecting stability. Record required inspections. Rectify defects before work. No unplanned entry or improvised rescue into an unsafe trench.

STOP • CHECK • ACT

**No entry until the
excavation is safe.**

Briefing aid: apply the project risk assessment, method statement and manufacturer instructions.

HSE guidance: [construction/safetytopics/excavations.htm](https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/excavations.htm)

DAMAGED ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Illustrative training scenario - not an actual IPS incident

1 BACKGROUND

Site tools and temporary supplies face water, dust and mechanical damage. Electrical defects can cause fatal injury.

2 SCENARIO

Training example: a worker finds a cut extension lead taped together beside a wet work area but considers using it to finish the task.

3 IMMEDIATE RISK

Electric shock, burns and fire are possible. Do not use or touch damaged parts. Keep others away and arrange safe disconnection.

4 CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

The damaged lead remained available. Checks had not identified the defect and a makeshift repair was accepted.

5 KEY CONTROLS

Use suitable site equipment, preferably cordless tools or a 110V centre-tapped-to-earth supply. Check equipment and remove damaged items from service. Protect cables; do not make makeshift repairs.

6 SUPERVISOR CHECK

Quarantine the faulty equipment and arrange repair or replacement by a competent person. Maintain an appropriate inspection and test programme. An RCD is additional protection, not permission to use damaged equipment. Electrical work requires competent personnel.

STOP • CHECK • ACT

Take damaged equipment out of use.

Briefing aid: apply the project risk assessment, method statement and manufacturer instructions.

HSE guidance: [construction/safetytopics/systems.htm](https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/systems.htm)

FLOOR OPENINGS AND EDGES

Illustrative training scenario - not an actual IPS incident

1 BACKGROUND

Unprotected stairwells, service openings and floor edges create fall risks during construction and fit-out.

2 SCENARIO

Training example: a temporary cover is moved to pass materials through a floor opening and the area is left accessible to other trades.

3 IMMEDIATE RISK

A worker may fall through the opening or be struck by falling materials below. Stop access and alert the supervisor.

4 CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

The cover was removed without a controlled method. Protection was not reinstated and other trades were not informed.

5 KEY CONTROLS

Avoid exposure to the edge where possible. Provide suitable collective protection, such as secured load-appropriate covers or guardrails. Warning tape alone does not prevent a fall. Plan protection during temporary removal.

6 SUPERVISOR CHECK

Confirm the protection is suitable, secure and checked before access. Control work below and brief affected trades. Agree who authorises removal and reinstatement. If personal fall protection is needed, plan competent use and rescue arrangements.

STOP • CHECK • ACT

**Protect the opening
before work continues.**

Briefing aid: apply the project risk assessment, method statement and manufacturer instructions.

HSE guidance: [construction/safetytopics/assess.htm](https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/assess.htm)