

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)