

CFMEU SAFETY ALERT

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Another preventable fatality due to a fall from heights

Urgent warning to principal contractors and personnel working at heights. Minimum standards save employers money until it costs a worker's life. An investigation is ongoing but initial observations raise serious concerns for the construction industry.

At approximately 4:00am on the 5/01/2017 a young worker was fatally injured when he fell 10 meters from a glass atrium roof. He was part of a crew installing and painting a new steel and glass atrium skylight at the Perth GPO Building in Forrest Chase.

Initial observations showed multiple openings on the steel atrium structure. Some openings were covered with loose plywood sheeting others were open and were not protected by barricading, hand railing or solid covering. Anchor points were installed into each side of the wall however after testing these anchor points were not installed to engineered specifications. There did not appear to be a fall prevention system installed for the worker to attach to.

The workers were also working off a glass roof at night under artificial lighting radiating from above and below the glass.

(See Photos below)



Open unprotected fall hazards

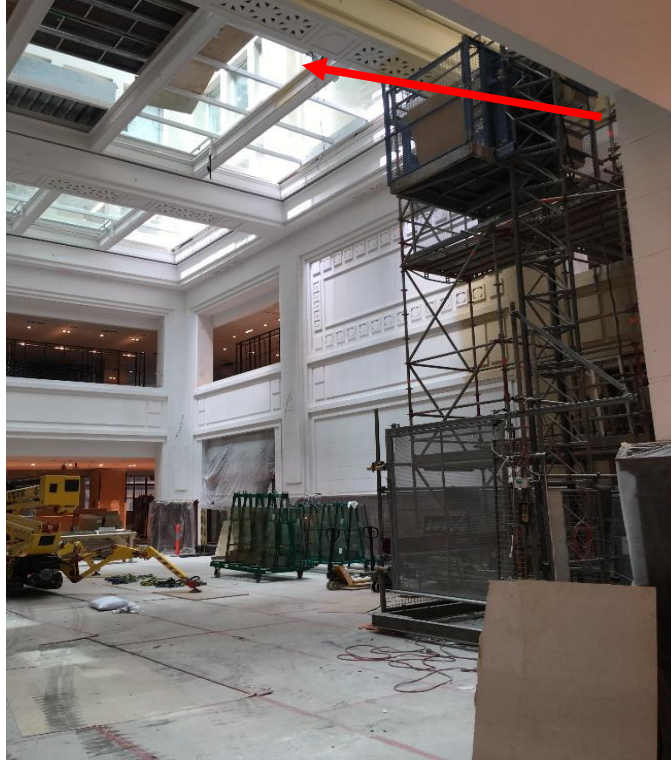
REPORT UNSAFE WORK PRACTICES - CALL (08) 9228 6900 OR EMAIL SAFETY@CFMEUWA.COM

Stand up. Speak out. Come home.

Authorised by Mick Buchan, State Secretary, CFMEU WA, 80 Beaufort St Perth

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Worker fell through an unprotected opening

Relying on the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is a cheap alternative. Lighting and worker fatigue need to be considered when working at night.

Three fatalities while working at height in the last seven months is more than enough evidence to show that reliance on PPE and minimum standards does not work.

The CFMEU recommends that all Principal Contractors, subcontractors and workers performing work at heights, stop work, reassess the task and take action to ensure that they apply the hierarchy of control principles to identify and implement the highest level of risk controls to prevent falls from heights.

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