The 5 falls from heights statistics that you must know

“to forever change safety in the world...one experience at a time”
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1. In Australia worker fatalities from falls from height average 10 people each year
2. Australian companies lose over 108,000 recordable days per annum due to falls in the workplace and the average days lost time due to a fall is 93 days (2009-2010 statistics)
3. Over 32% of falls resulted in a serious injury ('serious injury' defined as an injury of a fracture or more serious injury)
4. In construction, over 20% of all recorded injuries are from falls and this industry has the largest number of falls and historically the largest number of falls from height fatalities
5. The largest contributing factor to falls from heights in the last 2 years has been the improper use of ladders (cause of over 30% of falls).

After reviewing various Australian workplace injury and fatality records, the statistics above paint an alarming picture that falls from heights are still a very large cause of injuries and fatalities within Australian workplaces.

Our research found that:

- If personnel use height safety equipment appropriate for their work situation they are at a much lower risk of injury.
- In the majority of fatal falls from height the work could have been performed on the ground. If people whom work at height complete height safety training they are less likely to be injured from a fall as they understand the Regulatory and safety requirements to safely work at height.
- If your organisation has supervisors who understand the legislative requirements of conducting work at height and the different height safety systems that can be used safely, it is less likely that workers would be put at risk of an injury producing fall.
- If adequate height safety procedures are in place and workers are instructed properly they are less likely to place themselves in a situation where they could fall from height.
- Contractors are at a far higher risk of incident than employees with a regular workplace. We assume this is because they are less familiar with the sites falls from height hazards.
- The majority of workplaces are ill prepared to rescue a suspended worker after a fall from height and have insufficient training and equipment to perform a rescue.

If you want to substantially reduce the risk of a fall from height at your workplace, invest in relevant height safety training for your workers and supervisors and ensure that they have adequate height safety safety procedures and equipment in place.

By providing your staff and supervisors with height safety training, height safety procedures and appropriate protective equipment you will improve the confidence and competence of your staff in conducting work at height safely.

Summary:
This paper is an educational tool to give you the knowledge and skills to decide on the most appropriate height safety control measures for your workplace. I hope you read this document and this helps you in making an informed decision to reduce the likelihood of falls from height at your workplace. We wish you the very best with your workplace safety and we hope that this tool helps you to understand some of the research from within this field.

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Research Sources:
WA University Study/ Workcover VIC/ Workcover QLD/ Workcover NSW/ Workcover WA/ Workcover SA/ Workcover NT
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