

FALL PROTECTION NEWS Bulletin

19 September 2001

STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS UPDATE

- 1 The American National Standards Institute ANSI Z359 Committee periodic meetings to draft fall protection standards that was scheduled for 18-19 September 2001 in Chicago IL was cancelled due to the terrible events that occurred on 9/11/01. These meetings will be re-scheduled at a later date. For more info on various ANSI fall protection standards refer to Newsletter #2 displayed on the NAVFAC Safety Web Page.**
- 2. The International Standards Organization ISO/TC 94/SC4 annual working group meetings were held in Sydney Australia on 29-31 May 2001 for drafting international fall protection standards. Only Australia, Britain, Germany and US participated in the meetings. The US Technical Advisory Group consisted of seven members representing equipment manufacturers, one engineering firm and the US Navy. In addition to the plenary sessions, three working group meetings were held to draft the international standards for Work Positioning Devices, Horizontal lifelines and Rope Access.**

MISCELENEOUS NEWS

- 1. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) released the year 2000 Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. Deaths resulting from on-the-job falls, increased slightly to 734 in the year 2000 compared to 721 in 1999. This was the largest annual total recorded fatality census. To access the BLS Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries Summary, log on to <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/cfoi.nr0.htm>**
- 2. The Fall Protection Quality Management Board (FP QMB) kickoff meeting was held in Washington DC area on 17-18 July 2001. The majority of the initial meeting was spent in open discussion and brainstorming activities in review of the various goals and objectives of the Navy fall protection initiative that support the NAVOSH**

Strategic Plan. As established by NAVOSH 2001 Strategic Plan the FP QMB was assembled to address the Navy fall protection initiative by providing parameters and intervention strategies to reduce fall mishaps within the Navy. The FP QMB will focus on awareness, technical assistance, training and education, execution of fall protection projects and assist in sound policy/program development to achieve reduction of fall mishaps within the Navy by providing tools, criteria and safe work practices to establish viable fall protection programs at ships and ashore commands and be able to effectively address falls from heights. The next board meeting will be held in San Diego, CA early 2002. The Strategic Plan is posted on the NAVOSH Web site at <http://www.navosh.net>

3. The International Society for Fall Protection (ISFP) founded in 1988, membership includes representatives from 14 countries. The society issues useful fall protection information such as quarterly newsletter, publications and organizes international symposia and conferences. The web address for the ISFP is <http://www.isfp.org>

4. The following is an interesting quote from the ISFP brochure:
“Gravity is unquestionably one of mankind’s earliest hazards – certainly predating fire, noise, pollution and most other hazards of modern, industrialized economies. This “Gravity hazard” has always been in existence and responsible for humans falling from heights, slipping, tripping and falling. The result is injuries, disabilities and often death at alarming rates throughout the world.”

5. Extent of nonfatal falls in construction: Marion Gillen, RN, MPH, Ph.D., published an article in the American Journal of Industrial Medicine. The article discusses the injury severity of 255 construction workers who sustained nonfatal falls while on the job. According to National Safety Council almost 30% of mishaps causing lost workdays are due to nonfatal falls. The article included many interesting statistics regarding falls sustained by the study group, such as:
 - The average height of falls was 9.2 feet;
 - 74% of the falls were to lower level;

- **41% of workers fell from temporary work surfaces, such as ladders and scaffolds.**

This information is useful because it provides hard facts as to the damaging nature of falls, even when they are nonfatal.

FALL PROTECTION TIDBITS

1 Danger of Shoveling Snow and Cleaning Gutters: In certain parts of US and Europe, the snow season is fast approaching. Shoveling snow off roofs is hazardous because of the possibility of slipping off a roof or falling. Even cleaning gutters might be hazardous. As indicated in a previous fall protection newsletter, the following are some repeated suggestions for safe snow removal and cleaning of gutters.

- **Never step on sloped or icy flat roof, unless proper fall protection is used;**
- **When using ladder, make sure it is set at a correct angle;**
- **When climbing onto a roof using a ladder, make sure the ladder extends 3 feet over the supporting edge;**
- **Do not spread ice-melting chemicals on the roof, this could cause damage to the roof and gutters;**
- **For cleaning gutters from tree leaves, there are special hoses with nozzles in the market that can clean gutters while standing on ground level and without the risk of using a ladder.**

FALL PROTECTION PRESENTATIONS/POINT PAPERS

The attached files contain two out of 26 presentations/Point Papers from the International Fall Protection Symposium in Orlando FL on 18-19 October 2000:

- **The first presentation and point paper is titled Rope Access. Rope Access is a suspended access system in which a harness is incorporated as the primary means of attachment to the person suspended directly by the rope. The system uses two separately secured systems. One as a mean of access, egress and work**

positioning, and the other as a backup system. There are no US standards for such system. Rope Access is widely used in Europe and Australia. In The US it is used on limited bases in the tree trimming industry, window cleaning and rescue operations.

- **The second presentation/ point paper titled “Fall Protection Implementation Strategies, Motivational and Training Program”, by Roger Kahler of the InterSafe Group Pty Ltd. The paper emphasize the importance of motivation and training programs in any approach to damage reduction and that the quality of information available with respect to such aspects is excellent.**

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