Five Common Contributing Factors Fatality File

It is understood the man, 53, was performing renovation work from a ladder near the edge of a mezzanine floor when he fell to the ground floor. He suffered head injuries and died in hospital the following day.

WorkSafe Executive Director Health and Safety, Marnie Williams, said the incident was a terrible tragedy.

“It is a devastating reality that another family has lost a loved one due to an incident at work,” Ms Williams said.

“Falls are one of the most common causes of serious injury or death, which is why appropriate safety procedures are so important.”

Falling from heights is one of the leading causes of death and serious injury in Victorian workplaces. Since 2005, almost 18,000 workers have been injured seriously enough from a fall from height to make a claim for compensation. This year more than 400 workers have been injured from a fall.

Ms Williams said the reality was that workers did not have to fall from a significant height to be killed or suffer permanent injuries, which is why employers and contractors had to ensure the effectiveness of fall prevention control measures at their sites.

“Don’t assume that because you have never had a fall, your site is working safely. It may just mean you have been lucky – but safety can never be left to chance,” Ms Williams said.

Employers (including self-employed people) must identify and control the risk of falls from any height.

Safety tips:

- Eliminate the risk by doing all or some of the work on the ground or from a solid construction

- Reduce risk by using fall prevention devices like scaffolds, perimeter screens, guardrails, elevated work platforms or safety mesh
- Travel-restraint systems, industrial rope-access systems, catch platforms and fall arrest harness systems can also be used to reduce the risk of falls.