

PLATFORM STEPS FOR POLE TRUCK UNLOADING

This alert has been generated to ensure that all workers in Victoria are aware of the risks associated with non compliant and non maintained platform steps. The platform steps shown below was recently seen in service at a pole yard on a safety walk conducted at a Downer Utilities site in Beaconsfield with the Electrical Trades Union and Management. The steps had a broken mid rail and no service record.

Worksafe Victoria offers the below guidance for prevention of falls.

Falls from height can leave employees with permanent and debilitating injuries. Falls often occur from roofs, scaffolds, ladders, trucks and mezzanine floors or into pits or holes.

Falls from less than one metre can result in serious injuries such as fractures, spinal cord injury, concussions and brain damage. The risk of serious injury or death from a fall increases significantly when working at heights over two metres.

Where work must be done at height, ensure the work is done from one of the following (controls from lower on the list may only be used where it is not reasonably practicable to use controls from higher on the list):

- an elevated work platform or portable scaffold with secure handrails
- use travel restraint systems
- fall arrest systems (eg safety harness, industrial safety net or catch platform)
- step platforms
- ladders.



Checklists for inspections to detect any equipment faults and assess the condition of all platform steps should be developed along with a safe system of work for unloading poles that includes having regular inspections of the platform steps in line with the manufacturer's documentation.

If any of the above cannot be verified the work **should cease**. Contact your designated Health & Safety Representative, your local organiser or alternatively your Union OH&S Officer.