Following on from our article, ‘Preventing Falls from Height in the Construction Industry’, we look at a recent FOI request on working at height incidents.

Heighsafe submitted a Freedom of Information request to the following four companies:

- HS2 Ltd
- Sellafield Ltd
- Highways England (motorway works M1-M6); and
- Network Rail (Crossrail)

The request revealed that from the above major public projects 11% of all reported health and safety incidents originate from working at height. It was found that out of 538 non-fatal reported incidents across the projects above, 56 resulted from working at height, with Network Rail reporting 35 of these 56 incidents in relation to Crossrail.

In anticipation of the Health and Safety Executive publishing its business plan in March 2019, Heighsafe called for a renewed focus on dealing with the amount of preventable deaths and injuries as a result of working from height.

Although the HSE do not appear to deal with falling from height in their 2019/20 business plan, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on working at Height published a report in February, following a 12 month inquiry investigating the common causes of falls from height in the construction industry. The important recommendations for the future are summarised in our Article published in March [here].

There has been criticism of the HSE, from Heighsafe, for failing to deal with falls from height in their latest business plan as falls from height account for the highest number of fatal injuries in the workplace in the construction industry.

**Conclusion**

These latest figures released from the four major public projects highlights the importance of construction companies reviewing their health and safety procedures in relation to working at height. It is important that health and safety training on working at height is provided and renewed and that the health and safety legislation, including the Work at Height Regulations 2005, is regularly considered and understood by all those working in the construction industry.

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