

The [Access Industry Forum](#) (AIF) is comprised of the 11 leading industry and certification bodies committed to advancing safety in the working at height sector. Established in 2004, the AIF supports codes of good practice, equipment standards, training, education and knowledge. We are standards-driven and committed to advancing safety, best practice and competency, with the aim of preventing serious injury and fatalities while working at height.

Deaths as a result of working at height account for the highest number of workplace fatalities and injuries across all sectors in the UK. Between 2019/2020, of the 111 workers killed at work in Great Britain, 29 died as a result from working at height. This equates to two people every month. Whilst it represents a decrease of 11 working at height deaths on the figures from 2018/2019, the AIF believes that every employee has the right to feel safe in the work environment and nobody should go to work uncertain if they will return home.

As such, the AIF welcomes the opportunity to submit a written representation to HM Treasury to inform the 2020 Comprehensive Spending Review. Our submission proposes the introduction of enhanced reporting without additional financial or administrative burden for Government, the Health and Safety Executive or industry through the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).

The current reporting rules allow for a large degree of individual interpretation through the use of a 'free text box', where the person reporting is asked to describe in their own words what has occurred.

This results in mixed data which often does not contain enough detail of the incident which means that it is not as accurate as it could be. This represents a missed opportunity to improve health and safety policy by reducing the number of accidents from working at height.

The AIF would like to see this 'free text box' replaced with simple drop-down menus in order to improve the quality of data.

At a minimum, this enhanced reporting would record the scale of a fall, the method used (e.g. ladder, scaffolding etc.) and the circumstance of the fall. Enhanced reporting would address concern within the industry that improvements in safety are hampered by a lack of empirical data and an understanding of the root causes of falls from height.

Furthermore, comprehensive information would better inform the policies of Government and businesses, and the guidance issued by associations, and the regulations developed by regulators.

Enhanced reporting is a practical and cost-effective solution that will reduce the number of working at height fatalities and serious injuries. It will also be completed through amendments to the current system and without any additional financial or administrative burden to industry or government.

It is also important to consider that falls from height not only cause suffering and devastation to the injured, but also their family and colleagues. This in itself places a huge and long-term financial burden on the UK economy and taxpayer. If we better understand the causes of falls from height, which enhanced reporting will deliver, we can implement more effective measures to reduce the incidence, reducing the human suffering caused and also the burden on the economy and taxpayer.

In the words of the Prime Minister, the country needs to "*build, build, build*" and we understand the important role construction will play in the economic recovery. Alongside it, manufacturing and infrastructure will take a lead in furthering the return to prosperity. However, with the rush to return to productivity and to make-up for the time lost to lockdown, we cannot allow corners to be cut or standards to slip which could worsen the already unacceptable numbers of workplace fatalities.

COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW
REPRESENTATION FROM ACCESS INDUSTRY FORUM



Within this context, health and safety in the workplace, more than ever before, must be paramount. By implementing enhanced reporting, the Government will be prioritising a strong economic recovery from COVID-19 and also saving lives in a simple, practical and cost-effective way which will propel the UK to be a world leader in workplace health and safety.