

SAFETY CIRCULAR ON SAFE WORK PROCEDURES

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INTRODUCTION

Safe work procedures are sequence of plan of actions, in consistent with the generally accepted safe and sound practice, established for the purpose of carrying out work safely. Such safe work procedures should be made readily available at the workplace.

LEGAL OBLIGATIONS UNDER SECTION 47A OF THE FACTORIES ACT

Section 47A of the Factories Act requires that safe work procedures be implemented for certain types of work carried out in factories. The types of work are stipulated in the Twelfth Schedule. Example of such types of work are work in a confined space and work at a place where a person is liable to fall a distance of more than 3 metres or into any substance that is likely to cause drowning, poisoning, chemical burns or asphyxiation.

◆ **Identification of Hazards and Injuries**

Before any work specified in the Twelfth Schedule is carried out, the potential hazards to which persons could be exposed at the workplace must be identified. The injuries and harms that could arise from such hazards must also be identified.



Work at height

◆ **Elimination of Hazards**

Having identified the hazards that could be encountered in the execution of the work, appropriate measures must then be taken to reduce and, where possible, eliminate such hazards.

◆ ***Scope of Safe Work Procedures and Documentation***

The scope of safe work procedure must include:

- (a) the provision of suitable personal protective equipment to persons carrying out the work; and
- (b) the safety precautions to be taken in the course of work and during an emergency.
- (c) The established safe work procedures must be documented (written) and produced for inspection when requested by an inspector of factories.

◆ ***Dissemination of and Compliance with Safe Work Procedures***

All persons involved in the work specified in the Twelfth Schedule must be informed of the established safe work procedures, including the appropriate measures to reduce or eliminate the hazards. The persons involved in the work must observe and comply with them.

ESTABLISHMENT OF SAFE WORK PROCEDURES

Safe work procedures provide a careful planned step-by-step sequence of actions to carry out the work. In establishment of the safe work procedures of a particular type of

work, Job Safety Analysis is normally used to systematically examine the task involved in the work. The process for the Job Safety Analysis involved in a typical work are as follows:

- (a) Breakdown the task into its individual steps or activities. This could be done through group discussion with or by knowledgeable and resource personnel.
- (b) Identify potential safety and health hazards within each step of the task.
- (c) Verify that nothing about the task can be changed to make it safer and easier.
- (d) Develop control measures or safety precautions, including the provision of suitable types of personal protective equipment, to be taken for each potential hazard or problem area encountered in each step of the task.
- (e) Develop control measures or safety precautions to deal with an emergency should it occur during execution of the work.
- (f) Write standard safe work procedures based on the analysis and incorporating the derived control measures and safety precautions.

A flow chart on the establishment of the safe work procedures is at **Annex**.

It would be useful to check out the safe work procedures after they have been established by observing the personnel doing the work and seek their feedback. Their feedback would provide a useful source of information for refinement of the safe work procedures. Regular audits should also be conducted to ensure that safe work procedures had been strictly adhered to at all times.

Issued by
**THE CHIEF INSPECTOR OF FACTORIES
MINISTRY OF MANPOWER**



Work in a Confined Space

TWELFTH SCHEDULE (FACTORIES ACT)

WORK REQUIRING IMPLEMENTATION OF SAFE WORK PROCEDURES

- 1 Work on any machinery where the fencing has been removed for the purposes of any examination, lubrication or other operation referred to in section 23 (1).
- 2 Work at a place where a person is liable to fall a distance of more than 3 metres or into any substance that is likely to cause drowning, poisoning, chemical burns or asphyxiation.
- 3 Work in any confined space.
- 4 Work involving the application of heat, or the potential generation of any source of ignition, where any explosive or flammable substance is liable to be present.
- 5 Maintenance or repair work on any pressure vessel or lifting equipment.
- 6 Work on any process, plant, vessel or machinery that is liable to produce or give off any corrosive, toxic or flammable substance.
- 7 Work in compressed air environment or under water.

ANNEX

FLOW CHART FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF SAFE WORK PROCEDURES

