

Hazard Alert

Hazards of reo-bars



Government
of South Australia
SafeWork SA

Summary of incident

A formwork employee, gaining access over a 1.2 metre high framework structure under construction, fell approximately 300mm onto an uncapped reinforcement bar, when the tie wire of the reinforcement being used as a ladder collapsed under his weight.

The worker sustained a severe penetration wound injury resulting in admission to hospital.



Example of a reo-bar

Possible causes

- Climbing reinforcement is an unsafe system of working at height.
- Inadequate risk assessment was conducted for this task.

- Inadequate planning for the construction of the formwork.
- Reinforcement bars were not adequately capped.

Action required

- Carry out a detailed risk assessment prior to starting the job, considering all risks that could arise, and eliminate them from the work process, or put in place measures to control those risks.
- Plan tasks to eliminate or reduce any risks associated with formwork and the potential hazards associated with the use of reo-bars.
- Provide a safe means of access and egress to formwork.
- Exposed reo-bars should be securely capped where there is any potential risk to workers.
- Ensure that reo-bar caps are maintained throughout the progress of the task.
- Reinforced reo-bar caps should be considered when working at heights around vertical reo-bars.
- Note that non-reinforced reo-bar caps only prevent minor scratches and cuts, they will not prevent impalement.

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