

Ladder injuries continue to fall

For the third year running, Health & Safety Executive (HSE) statistics show a fall in the number of injuries involving ladders and stepladders. From 2,132 in 2007/8 to 2,011 in 2008/9 and 1,817 in 2009/10.

This despite an average overall increase of 51 percent in the total number of falls from height reported to HSE over the same period. Looking at the 10 year trend the 1,817 compares with 2,631 ladder-related injuries reported in 2001/02, a drop of 31 percent, add to this the improved accident reporting regimes now in force and the improvement is even more significant.

The Ladder Association believes that no single initiative is responsible, but rather a combination of initiatives, many of which have been driven by the association in collaboration with other agencies, in particular the HSE and the Access Industry Forum (AIF), of which it is a founder member.

"It cannot be denied that these welcome statistics coincide with a significant increase in the number

of users successfully completing a Ladder Association training course" says chairman, Chris Ball. "Since the training scheme was launched in November 2005, after the initial surge, the year-on-year growth in the numbers trained has been consistent at around 25 percent." "We have constantly promoted the message that if it's right to use a ladder, use the right ladder and to get trained to use it safely and that message finally seems to be getting through, especially when it's supported by campaigns like *Don't be a ladder lightweight* aimed at experienced ladder users with a jaundiced view of training. We are also the first to acknowledge that HSE's Ladder Exchange programme has had a major impact in raising awareness and understanding of the need to inspect and maintain ladders and stepladders in order to keep them safe for use. Actively supported by the association since its launch in 2007, the campaign has helped remove thousands of 'dodgy' and damaged ladders from the workplace."

"The Ladder Exchange has proved to be an excellent example of what can be achieved when the trade body, regulator and the industry at large work towards a common goal. Neither can the work of the AIF be overlooked, since 2004 it has provided an effective platform for the association to address a wide and varied audience at events like the Safety & Health Expo and IOSH Conference and Exhibition, which have contributed to driving home the safety and best practice message."

Ladder Association set to take over Ladder Exchange

The Ladder Association has agreed in principle to take over and manage the HSE Ladder Exchange from 2012. The programme was piloted in 2007 by the HSE in partnership with the Ladder Association, major manufacturers and national retailers. Since then over 8,000 'dodgy' ladders have been exchanged for new ones at a discounted price. Of equal importance, if not more so, is the way in which the campaign has raised awareness and understanding of the need to check and inspect ladders prior to use.

The current initiative, which is open to anyone who wants to swap their broken, bent or damaged ladder for a new one, runs at participating partners until 30th November 2011.



More at www.hse.gov.uk/falls/ladderechange.htm

New: Non-User inspection course

The association has launched its new Ladder & Stepladder Non-User Inspection Course aimed, as its title suggests, at those who supervise and oversee the work of ladder users in the workplace and those who carry out periodic statutory inspections. Successful completion

of the course will enable them to:

- Identify component parts using industry standard naming conventions
- Thoroughly inspect ladders and stepladders and identify safety critical faults
- Record findings in accordance with statutory requirements
- Properly record inspections and recommend any necessary follow-up action

Association news in brief

Step Change newsletter

Step Change is the name of the association's new electronic newsletter targeted at health and safety professionals and decision makers in the public and private sectors, trade associations and federations whose members are regular ladder users, and third party organisations such as the British Safety Council, the Association for Project Safety, IOSH and RoSPA. To subscribe, email: jill.couttie@ladderassociation.org.uk

European Ladder Federation

Plans are now well advanced for the formation of the European Ladder Federation, which will be established in Brussels. Comprising the principal European ladder associations the secretariat will be held by each country in turn, starting with Spain.

IOSH 2012 Conference & Exhibition

'Health and safety: Changing perceptions' is the title of

next year's event, 6-7 March at Manchester Central. As in previous years, the association will be represented through its membership of the AIF

Toolbox Talks Don't miss the association's technical manager, Don Aers, answering frequently asked questions about ladders and stepladders on the AIF website. To view the free online video, visit www.accessindustryforum.org.uk DVD copies of the Toolbox Talk are also available and can be purchased from jill.couttie@ladderassociation.org.uk

Advocate Scheme

The Advocate team's 2011 diary is fast filling up. Several speaking engagements have already been confirmed, including a series of presentations at the National Painting & Decorating Show. Any organisation interested in hosting a talk should contact jill.couttie@ladderassociation.org.uk



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