

Access Industry Forum and HBF launch Toolbox Talks for platform decking

February 14, 2022



The Access Industry Forum's (AIF) is looking to repeat the success of last year's ladder and stepladder safety toolbox talks released, with a new series of toolbox talks focusing on the safe use of access platform decking systems have been released.

The AIF is the forum for the principal trade associations and federations involved in work at height. Each organisation represents a different sector of the access industry and fosters and supports codes of good practice, equipment standards, training, education and knowledge.

The new resources, created by the AIF, Fall Arrest Safety Equipment Training (FASET), and supported by the Home Builders Federation (HBF), will provide installers, supervisors, and managers with guidance on planning and installing access platform decking systems.

Falls from height remain one of the leading causes of workplace fatalities and injuries in the UK – accounting for 35 fatalities in 2020/2021 – 20 of which occurred in the construction sector. With access platform decking, planning is key and without good planning site workers can make “DIY” upper floor access hatches that could be insufficient and unsafe, causing serious injury. These new toolkits provide guidance and key points for installers, site supervisors and site managers to consider when using access hatches, and how to avoid misuse and cross-contamination of access platform decking systems.

The free toolbox talks are aimed at those working on home building sites but can also be used by organisations of any size at no cost. There are six toolbox talks available covering the following areas:

- Access Platform Decking Systems Upper Floor Access Hatches – Guidance for Installers/ Dismantlers
- Access Platform Decking Systems Upper Floor Access Hatches – Guidance for Supervisors
- Access Platform Decking Systems Upper Floor Access Hatches – Guidance Note for Site Managers
- Misuse of Access Platform Decking Systems
- Cross-Contamination of Access Platform Decking System Components
- Plot Access for Access Platform Decking System Installation

Tony Seddon, Managing Director of FASET and Director of AIF, said, “These toolkits have been created to help site workers at all levels understand how to reduce the risks involved when installing and managing the use of platform decking systems. The guidance offers simple, practical advice alongside visual examples of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ practice, with signposts for further information. We hope these new resources will provide the simple and clear information needed to help guide workers and improve safety on site.”

Nathan Preston, Head of Safety, Health, Environment and Quality (SHEQ) at Gleeson Homes and HBF Health and Safety Committee RIDDOR subgroup chair, said, “We are continuously looking at ways to improve health and safety when working on site. This new guidance on platform decking will allow us to share good practice and open discussions with others on hazards and solutions that will help reduce accidents and injuries and create a better working environment”.

To access and download these toolkits, visit www.hbf.co.uk/hsresources. You can also access additional resources to your phone or other smart device by clicking the QR codes on the guidance.