

## *Important News*

**To: BFFF Members' Health & Safety Contacts**

**Date: 11<sup>th</sup> September 2007**

### **FALLS FROM VEHICLES**

Did you know that falling from a stationary vehicle is a common workplace accident?

Every year approximately 2000 workers are seriously injured in falls from HGVs – many of them break arms, legs and ankles.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is urging fleet managers and buyers of commercial vehicles to think seriously about driver safety, particularly in the area of loading and unloading.

Fleet managers are encouraged to ask for additional safety features to be built into every new vehicle they order. (Many of these features can be retrofitted).

HSE has contacted hundreds of suppliers and manufacturers of commercial vehicles to give them advance warning of the likely increase in demands for the kind of safety specifications listed below:

1. Steps and ladders to load areas and suitable handholds. Steps are better than ladders - they give a more stable footing - and rigid handholds are better than straps or monkey ropes.
2. Slip-resistant materials or coatings on surfaces where people will walk. (Focus on materials with high microroughness, not a profiled surface like chequer plate.)
3. All steps, including cab steps, to have even step height and be deep enough for safety boots.
4. On artics, the fifth wheel coupling hoses fitted on a sliding connector block -so no need to climb on the fifth wheel catwalk.
5. Catwalks large enough to provide a good foothold; level and made of anti-slip material.
6. Controls for equipment such as refrigeration units, tail lifts and lorry cranes, at ground level.
7. Controls to reduce water and ice build-up in the load area of refrigerated vehicles to avoid the risk of slipping.

Visit <http://www.hse.gov.uk/fallsfromvehicles> for tips, case studies and more advice.

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