



OH&S Alert!

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Erection of concrete panels on low strength slabs

We all know about the horrific consequences of panel collapses in our industry. We cannot allow productivity and profit to override the health and safety of workers.

Standing concrete panels on green and/or low strength concrete slabs is a dangerous and risky procedure, especially if the procedures do not take into consideration all the things that can go wrong and positively address these issues.

The consequences of either poorly designed or poorly implemented procedures can be devastating – and we don't want to wait for that to happen!!

Industry stakeholders are currently meeting to discuss and come up with agreed processes and procedures to ensure the highest levels of safety are provided in standing panels on concrete slabs. Until there are agreed procedures and processes in place, the CFMEU instructs all sites to implement and abide by the following:

- 1.** Under the Pre-Cast and Tilt-Up Concrete for Buildings industry standard, unless specifically designed otherwise, the minimum concrete strength required for brace footings at the time of installation must be at least 20MPa. This must be verified in writing (Clause 4.13).
- 2.** Regardless of what any specifically designed

configuration may indicate, the CFMEU policy is that the concrete strength of the brace footing must be no less than 15MPa at the time of installation.

- 3.** Each specifically designed configuration must be for one particular project. It is not a standard document or method for fixing concrete panels.
- 4.** Each specifically designed configuration must have been tested consistent to an Australian Standards testing regime prior to it being allowed to be used on a project. This documentation as well as testing results must be provided to the site, the OHS rep and all other interested parties.

- 5.** The engineer who has designed and tested the specifically designed configuration, or another engineer employed by that engineer, must sign off and verify that the exact requirements of the specific design brief for the particular project have all been carried out and performed exactly as required prior to the pouring of the concrete slab.

It is important to understand that the safety factors and methods and procedures currently in use in industry differ greatly. Until the industry can agree upon a consistent process with sufficient safety levels built into the system, the above procedures will apply.



How safe do you feel, knowing that the concrete panel you're working around could be totally reliant on just this ferule, a piece of reo and a bit of wet concrete?

Contact your organiser or the CFMEU OHS Unit for assistance.

The CFMEU OH&S Unit gratefully acknowledges the support of Incolink. Authorised by Bill Oliver, Secretary, Tommy Watson and John Setka, Assistant Secretaries of the CFMEU Construction and General Division. www.cfmeuvic.com.au

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