

# HEALTH AND SAFETY FOCUS

Information & guidance for Rural clients

Autumn 2022

“I joined the business in February 2022 and have been working closely with our teams, getting to know the varied client base and risk profile we have, introducing improvements to our processes and arrangements and enjoying helping to make excellent health and safety management our strength. As a Chartered Member of the Institute of Occupational Safety & Health (CMIOSH), with a background in the construction and more latterly in the rural sector, I know that great health and safety goes hand-in-hand with good businesses. I look forward to supporting our clients in striving for best practice in health and safety management”.

**Guliver Hedley, Health and Safety Manager**

## FATALITY RATES IN AGRICULTURE & CONSTRUCTION

Agriculture and Construction, both key areas where we and our clients have significant activities and interests, remain the two highest-risk areas of the UK workforce looking at the fatality rates. Agriculture fatality rates are approx. 20 x higher than other “all industry” per population.

While there has been an overall reduction of fatalities in the longer term, the data indicates that a plateau has been reached, suggesting that there is more that all of us involved at all levels can do to improve standards.

### What can be done?

Challenge the accepted norms and ask questions. It’s not about creating more documents, but changing behaviour.

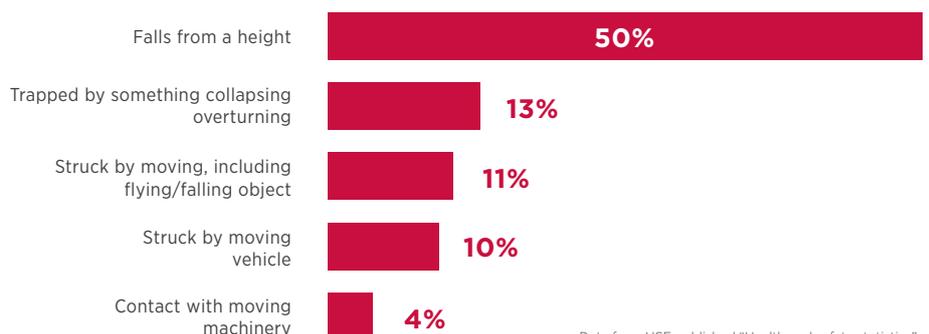
Health and safety starts at the top; as leaders, our behaviour, words and approach to how we do things has a huge influence on the health and safety culture of an organisation. An effective simple method to consider is to ask questions: by asking “How are you going to do this safely?” sends a powerful message that you care about their health and safety, are interested and are prepared to empower people and listen.

See the following page for some ideas on how you could address common health and safety Hot Spots.

### Agricultural fatalities April 21- March 22



### Construction fatalities April 20 - March 21



Data from HSE published “Health and safety statistics”

## THE HOT SPOTS

The HSE data indicates that the activities associated with farming and construction accidents were not particularly unusual or exotic, it's likely that the work being done was seen as a normal working practice and probably not as being risky.

By talking through the steps involved in the activities and the methods used, with those doing the work, we can look for areas of risk, and take the opportunity to address them.

The following hazards are aspects of work which are commonly seen in both agriculture and construction, which are also featured in the causes of fatalities, along with some broad guidance on how to consider and reduce the risks involved.



### Work at Height

If a fall could likely result in an injury or worse to you, your employees, contractors or others, suitable fall prevention methods must be in place. This could mean going beyond what may be the current & accepted way of doing things. If someone can fall, and the fall is likely to result in an injury, then a better solution should be found.

Key considerations when planning work at height include:

- Is a ladder really the best (safest) option to work from? Ladders can slip easily and Alternative lightweight & practical access equipment is readily available to buy or hire as well as a range of personal fall protection equipment.
- How are people protected when working on fragile roofs? Competence of those doing the job and equipment selection must be considered in detail.
- How are materials and equipment stopped from falling onto people below?
- How are people going to and from the work at height?



### Machinery & equipment

If it's reasonably possible that somebody could get injured through normal use of a machine, steps must be taken to prevent this such as physical guards & safety devices, followed by clear safe working practices.

- Consider if the machine proposed is the right thing for the job, i.e. is it being used as intended? Has it been adapted in some way? Is the machine / equipment suitable for the work type / volume and location? What training and experience have the users had? Do you need to check? Do they look competent and in control when observing how they use it?
- How is the condition of the machinery maintained? Is there a system for checking and addressing any issues where found?
- Do in-built safety mechanisms appear intact? i.e. guarding, emergency stops, interlocks etc.?
- Is there a safe system to deal with blockages & cleaning / maintenance?



### Falling objects

Things falling off something else, stacked or stored items falling, or even natural events (trees & branches falling) are a significant cause of death and injury. Try to consider, with as much objectivity as possible, when looking around the workplace or picturing the activity what things could reasonably foreseeably fall, and if so, what is stopping people getting hurt?

- Look for piles, stacks and heaps of things (tyres, bales, pallets, boxes), how high? How stable? What if the weather changes, is it reasonably possible that an impact could occur?
- What method is being used to lift an item, and store it? E.g. doors, windows. Consider additional securing methods and segregating people away from the activity.
- Where you have a responsibility for the trees on your property, ensure that regular, competent tree surveys are undertaken to help check for hazards, especially where they border roads, rails and footpaths, and where you may have people on your premises.



### Moving vehicles

Consider where you may have vehicles (tractors, forklifts, cars, trucks) moving around and near people, such as loading / unloading activities or operated plant. Consider what measures can be taken to keep moving vehicles away from people. Bear in mind that a significant proportion of those injured have been associated with the vehicle, such as operators or those involved in the work activity (banksmen and the like).

- Simple preventative practices such as Safe Stop should be used habitually, and encouraged / enforced by managers
- Why are the vehicles and people in the same place? Can the work be arranged to avoid it? It might be useful to sketch out a plan view of the workplace layout showing vehicle movement and pedestrian routes, looking to avoid or improve the areas where they intersect
- If this can't be avoided all together, can rules be put in place such as keeping minimum distances and for when reversing and when approaching vehicles?

## SUPPORTING YOUR BUSINESS'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

Strutt and Parker can offer our clients professional health and safety advice, acting as your “competent person”. This can include one-off consultancy services on specific matters, or extend to visiting client sites, inspections and providing support with recommended actions and implementing improvements. If you'd like to discuss how we could review your business's health and safety, please contact your local agent.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST



Use this list to help ensure that you've got suitable arrangements in place for the following aspects and hazards typically found in estates and rural businesses

H&S Policy / description of arrangements document <input type="checkbox"/>	Construction, repair & maintenance work <input type="checkbox"/>
Risk Assessment of work activities <input type="checkbox"/>	Machinery & equipment <input type="checkbox"/>
Fire Risk Assessment <input type="checkbox"/>	Management of Contractors <input type="checkbox"/>
Asbestos survey & management plan <input type="checkbox"/>	Work at height <input type="checkbox"/>
Electrical Inspection records <input type="checkbox"/>	Health and safety training <input type="checkbox"/>
Gas installations inspection records <input type="checkbox"/>	Welfare facilities <input type="checkbox"/>
Legionella Risk Assessment <input type="checkbox"/>	Reporting & investigating accidents <input type="checkbox"/>
Workplace traffic risk assessment <input type="checkbox"/>	Management of residential tenancies <input type="checkbox"/>
Events <input type="checkbox"/>	Management of commercial tenancies <input type="checkbox"/>
Fire & emergency procedures <input type="checkbox"/>	First Aid <input type="checkbox"/>
Overhead / underground services <input type="checkbox"/>	Visitors & children <input type="checkbox"/>
Tree safety management plan <input type="checkbox"/>	Personal Protective Equipment <input type="checkbox"/>

## CONTACT US



### HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGER

**GULLIVER HEDLEY**

07443 158017

[gulliver.hedley@struttandparker.com](mailto:gulliver.hedley@struttandparker.com)

