

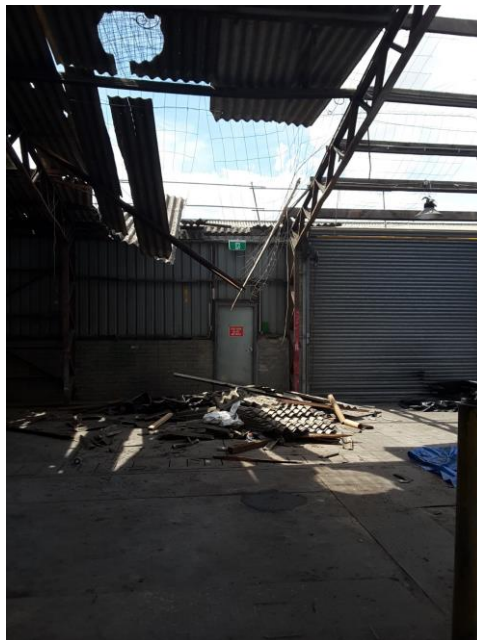
28/03/2019

## Serious Injury

- **Incident date:** 28/02/2019
- **Event:** Structural collapse
- **Location:** MOOREBANK

### Incident Overview

Eight workers were removing an asbestos roof and stacking the asbestos sheets on the existing roof. The condition of the timber roof structure was unable to support the weight of the stacked sheets. Part of the roof collapsed and two workers fell with the asbestos sheets to the concrete floor below. The fall was approximately four metres. The workers were not wearing any safety harnesses at the time of the incident, however, there was temporary roof edge protection and roof safety mesh in place.



Photograph 1: Construction site where works were being done.

### The site

The site is located at MOOREBANK. Activities undertaken at the site include asbestos removal work.

## The investigation

SafeWork NSW Inspectors responded to the incident.

Our [Prosecution Guidelines \(January 2018\)](#) outline our approach to prosecutions and Safe Work Australia's [National Compliance and Enforcement Policy](#) provides guidance on their approach to compliance. These documents set out factors that will be considered in determining the investigative approach and appropriate outcome.

## Safety Information

Businesses are reminded of their duty to identify hazards and manage risks to health and safety in accordance with the provisions of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) and [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017](#).

When working on existing structures, such as during refurbishment, renovation or demolition work, a competent person should assess the integrity of the structure and determine whether it is strong enough to support the weight of workers and materials, and, will remain stable during the work. Additional propping or bracing may be required, and roofing material may need to be lowered as they are removed rather than stacked on the roof.

Work should be conducted from the ground or a solid construction such as an elevated work platform (EWP) or scaffolding. Where work at a height is required, a safe means of access and adequate fall protection must be provided. Any existing permanently installed fall protection devices such as roof safety mesh, fall arrest anchorages and similar controls should be assessed before use to ensure they have been installed correctly and have not deteriorated over time.

Where harness-based fall arrest is to be used a rescue plan must be developed and tested to ensure it is effective.

## Further information

Please refer to the following guidance materials:

- [Working at heights webpage](#) (includes safety videos, posters and other practical information)
- [Managing the risk of falls at workplaces COP](#)
- [Construction work COP](#)
- [Demolition work COP](#)
- [How to safely remove asbestos COP](#)
- [SafeWork Pocket Guide to Construction Safety](#)

## About this information release

We have issued this information to draw attention to the occurrence of a serious injury in the construction industry. Investigations are ongoing and further information may be published as it becomes available.

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing. Users are reminded of the need to ensure any information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate SafeWork NSW officer or the user's independent adviser. No conclusions should be drawn from the information in this publication about the cause of the incident or the culpability of any party.

All photographs were taken by SafeWork NSW.