

Technical Bulletin No 3

Number of Workers Above a Safety Net

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Safety Nets to EN1263-1 (greater than 35m² and 5m minimum side length) are subjected to a type test involving a 100kg falling 7m (6m plus an allowance for the height of the centre of gravity of a human). The nominal acceptable total fall energy is therefore 6kJ on a new net.

The use of safety nets for primary protection within the UK are rigged as close as possible to the working area, and should be a maximum fall height of 2m.

The number of workers protected by an individual safety net that complies with EN 1263-1 & 2, must be contained within the capacity of the net. For a 2m maximum fall height, and allowing 100kg per worker including tools, this would set the maximum at 2 workers over any individual net.

If 3 workers are required to work above a safety net, a specific risk assessment must be done to assess the risk of more than 2 workers falling into the safety net simultaneously. If the risk is deemed to be zero then 3 workers would be able to work above the safety net.

For an increase of safety factor the use of B-specification EN1263-1 safety nets should be considered, as they have a nominal loading of 180 percent of that of an A- specification safety net.