

FASET Bulletin SN20 (Revision 3)

Reporting Falls into Safety Nets

Purpose

Safety nets are designed to provide a soft landing and will stretch when a person (or object) impacts the net meshes. The net will deform under impact to absorb the energy of the falling person, through the mesh knots slipping and tightening (knotted nets) or net meshes (knotless nets) deflecting through plastic deformation.

The amount the loaded net *stretches* depends upon a number of factors, such as the height of the fall, the weight of the faller (plus any materials) and the position of impact in the net.



For these reasons, it is not possible to predict the performance of the net should it be subjected to additional loadings in the future. BS EN 1263-1 stipulates that nets should be checked by a competent person after loading. This is generally considered to be the manufacturer (not the installing company) and due to the logistics of this, FASET recommends that safety nets should only be loaded once.

Why report falls

- BS 8411 6.1 states; “Nets that have been used to arrest falls should not be used again until a competent person advises it is safe to do so”
- Once loaded, the net owners need to ensure it is taken out of circulation and disposed of
- The fall into the net will have been a result of an unplanned event. By reporting the fall, others in the construction chain can learn about the background to the fall and put measures in place to minimise the opportunities for it to re-occur
- FASET have a commitment to gather statistics on the use of safety nets. We share this with other parties including the HSE, to further the safety interests of the workforce.

What to report

- A brief description of the events leading up to the fall
- Where in the net the faller landed
- Detail on any injuries sustained
- A brief description of the fallers exit from the net (as per plan or otherwise)

Note: Falls into nets should include significant materials, goods or plant in addition to people as these can also have a detrimental impact on the future performance of the safety net.

Who to report falls to

- The net rigging company immediately
- Site management
- The company who may have workers above or adjacent to the loaded net.
- FASET have an easy to use form on the website: – <http://www.faset.org.uk/report-of-a-fall>
- Call FASET on 01948 780652

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FASET
Fall Arrest Safety Equipment Training

References:

BSI (British Standards Institution). 2007. *BS 8411: Code of practice for safety nets on construction sites and other works*. London: BSI.

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