

11 October 2018

**AMENDMENTS TO THE OHS CODES FOR PREVENTING FALLS**

HIA has been advised that the Minister for Finance, Robin Scott, has approved the making of the following new OHS Codes:

1. The prevention of falls in housing construction compliance code.
2. The prevention of falls in general construction compliance code.

HIA was only advised yesterday that the codes have been approved and that they will come into effect from today, Thursday 11 October 2018.

The new *Prevention of falls in housing construction* compliance code replaces the *Prevention of falls in housing construction* code of practice (2004). This new code includes changes of significance to HIA members, the most notable being:

Floor laying and wall framing tasks

- This amendment calls for edge protection, such as guardrailing, to be provided before undertaking this work if the potential fall height is greater than two metres - a change from 3.8 m previously

Fixing fascias and gutters

- This amendment calls for a two plank platform to be used to perform this work at heights of more than 1.5 m metres, with the exception that a single plank may still be used at heights of between 1.5 and 2 metres if the platform is fitted with guardrails. This represents a change from the previous 2 m threshold for single planks.

The changes have been brought in despite HIA' strong representations and submissions to WorkSafe during the revision of the code. HIA called for a comprehensive and objective assessment of the potential impacts of both matters prior to their introduction. HIA also wrote the Minister outlining our concerns with these measures and the lack of proper justification for the changes.

It is also disappointing that no reasonable allowance has been made for a phase-in period for implementation of the changes by builders. There are essentially no transitional arrangements or allowance for builders to alter their systems to cater for these changes. HIA is seeking an urgent meeting with WorkSafe to obtain further advice on this matter.

WorkSafe has also advised the new codes will be available today for download from the WorkSafe website: [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au)

As previously mentioned these matters are effective as of today 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

**MEMBER ALERT**