



IRATA SAFETY BULLETIN SB40 Dropped Objects

Dropped Objects

Issue No.	SB40
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Issuer	IRATA Health & Safety Committee
Status	Report following Operating member's reports

1. Summary

Member companies continue to submit incident reports regarding dropped objects from height, see selection below as reported by the Operating Member Companies (OMC). The H&S Committee would like to re-enforce the message from SB 28 and SB 35, highlight again, the need to treat this issue with the respect it deserves, considering the severity of consequences a dropped object can pose.

Incident 1: *“Technician tried to place rope clamp on their rope, the rope clamp slipped out of their hand and fell to the ground.”*

Incident 2: *“Technician handed an unsecured crowbar to another technician. The crowbar fell from height and landed on a balcony below. No damage was reported.”*

Incident 3: *“While performing window cleaning by utilizing rope access, the wiper fell down on the ground, inside the barricaded area.”*

Incident 4: *“Technician used a karabiner to attach a 4 in 1 gas multi meter to him; he clipped through the ring of the multi meter and attached it to his harness. Whilst working, the ring of the multi meter where the karabiner clipped through had broken resulting in the multi meter falling from height.”*

2. Incident analysis

The responsible rope access team employing tools and equipment at height must ensure the suitability and fitness for service of the equipment.

3. Health and safety committee - Recommendations for further control measures

- Conduct thorough pre-use checks of items/tools/equipment used at height regarding its structural integrity and suitability for use in a tethered configuration.
- Consider also using proprietary tool tethers to secure hand tools to prevent dropping, depending on the weight of the tool can be secured to the technician, having larger heavy or cumbersome tools and equipment attached to a separate hauling/lowering system.
- Rope access equipment itself can become a dropped object if not handled carefully.
- A pre-use check consisting of a visual, tactile and function check should be carried out before each use. Operators should continue to monitor the safety of the system during use.

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- Consider the use of catch nets, bags with large openings etc. when removing fragile and brittle objects or substances to prevent them from falling. In some cases overhead protection of sensitive equipment below or the coverage of thoroughfares might become essential.
- 4. Health and safety committee - Recommendations for further reading**
- For further information on identifying hazards and measuring risk reference **ICOP 2.2.4 & Annex A – Risk assessment;**
 - For further information on safe execution of sequence of procedure reference **ICOP Annex B – Safety method statements;**
 - For further information on securing tools see **ICOP 2.11.8.2.2;**
 - For further information on exclusion zones reference **ICOP 1.4.2.6 & 2.11.8 - Exclusion zones.**
 - For further information on tool attachment methods reference **ICOP Annex M - Use of tools and other work equipment.**