

PRESS RELEASE

SAFE WORKING AT HEIGHT – TIGHT CONTROL SAVES LIVES

This latest summary to year end 2003 completes 15 years of collating safety records from IRATA members. It clearly demonstrates the excellent safe working record of IRATA members. This is a reflection of the stringent controls which have been put into place by IRATA including the training and registration scheme for technicians, General Requirements for Safe Working, and the Guidelines for the use of Rope Access Methods for Industrial Purposes. In addition to these each member undergoes a thorough vetting procedure by third party auditors before IRATA membership is approved.

From the summary table it can be seen that the hours spent on the rope have increased sevenfold since 1989. However the total incident rate for work on ropes over the 13 years is very similar to that obtained in 1989.

While the figures show how much the IRATA figures are lower than industry as a whole they do not give the full picture. The IRATA figures are based on only those who work on ropes or in conjunction with rope access. The industry figures include the total numbers employed in the industry, whether they are wages clerks, call centre workers or receptionists. In addition the IRATA figures show only the hours worked in conjunction with rope access, they do not include down time or holidays etc. Taking these considerations into account it is possible to claim that despite being a supposedly hazardous activity the IRATA system for safe working using rope access is possibly four times safer than industry generally and eight times safer than the construction industry taken as a whole.

The continuing excellent results posted by the members have now been recognised by the insurance industry. IRATA is pleased to announce that a bespoke liability insurance facility has been arranged for the members of the association. For further details please contact IRATA 01252 739150 www.irata.org

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Accident and incident returns by IRATA companies for the year 2003.
Tables of results.

Table 1. Brief summary of accidents over the fifteen years 1989 - 2003 based on hours worked on ropes.

	No of companies submitting returns.	Hours on ropes	Dangerous occurrences	None notifiable accidents when working on ropes	Notifiable accidents under RIDDOR when working on ropes	Incident rate for dangerous occurrences when working on ropes	Incident rate for all accidents when working on ropes	Total incident rate when working on ropes
1989	9	267,504	4	8	0	1.5	3	4.5
1990	12	327,645	4	7	0	1.2	2.1	3.3
1991	16	457,928	5	17	0	1.1	3.7	4.8
1992	22	537,920	3	13	1	0.5	2.6	3.16
1993	23	327,000		21	0		6.42	6.42
1994	32	348,749	1	11	0	0.28	3.15	3.44
1995	32	484,285	8	16	0	1.65	3.3	4.95
1996	26	559,035	5	18	2	0.89	3.58	4.47
1997	31	699,688	13	11	9	1.86	2.86	4.72
1998	37	1,006,538	14	23	10	1.395	3.288	4.67
1999	33	803,365	10	29	3	1.24	3.98	5.23
2000	34	887,206	6	21	3	0.79	2.70	3.38
2001	49	999,010	15	25	4	2.0	5.3	4.40
2002	49	1,225,930	10	12	-	0.82	0.98	1.79
2003	56	1,634,482	1	9	Nil	0.06	0.55	0.61
Totals		10,566,285	99	241	32	0.94	2.58	3.22

Note: The number of companies submitting returns for each year given above will not be the same as the number of companies members of the association for the relevant years.