INFORMATION

Safety Alert

The use of proprietary equipment outside of manufacturers guidance

13 August 2025

The following pages of this safety alert were issued by National Highways' supply chain partner:

Costain

If you have any queries about this safety alert information announcement or any other safety announcement then please contact HealthSafety&Wellbeingteam@nationalhighways.co.uk

Safety alert: The use of proprietary equipment outside of manufacturers guidance

Incident details

An incident occurred involving the improper use of a staging board leading to two operatives being safely rescued from height without injury.

To facilitate a bespoke V-deck installation under a bridge, the staging board was used in a cantilevered manner over a leading edge (following a change in the initial RAMS methodology which was found not to be workable).

The use of the staging board in this manner is contrary to the manufacturer's guidance which specifies that the staging board should be supported at both ends with weight evenly distributed across it. The cantilevered use, led to the staging board failing and the operatives requiring rescue from their fall arrest equipment. The rescue was completed in a timely manner however not as per the planned arrangements due to restrictions in the working area.

Figure 1: The snapped staging board

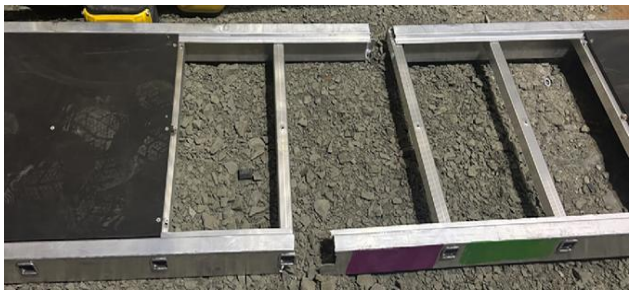

Figure 2: Incorrect methodology

Review actions

- Ensure all equipment is used in line with the manufacturer's guidance including all specialist / proprietary systems.
    - Always read the instructions (technical data) and install the staging in accordance with those instructions; adhering to the safe working load, it's distribution across the staging (this includes people, tools and equipment)
    - Ensure each end of the staging is installed with at least the minimum overhang and secured to prevent unintentional movement
    - Inspect the staging before every use as per the manufacturer's guidance
    - Never use the staging if any part is damaged or shows signs of wear
- Ensure any change in the planned and approved methodology is documented (reviewed, approved and briefed).
- Ensure assurance on the activities is undertaken to check compliance to the RAMS.
- Ensure a working rescue plan is in place, relevant to the task involved and the working environment. Ensure the rescue arrangements are practised.

For information contact:	mailto:she@costain.com	**Raised by:**	Ben Masheter
SHE alerts and briefings:	SHE Alerts - Intranet	**Reviewed by:**	Gavin Bye
Date:	1/7/25	**Revision:**	Rev 01