



## **UNSAFE WORK PRACTICES – PHOTOS**

### **OHSA Press Release – 26 September 2014**

This press release is being issued in response to the photos being posted by the media showing unsafe work practices.

Media and members of the general public are being urged to immediately inform OHSA of any unsafe work practices in order to take the necessary measures so as to safeguard the health and safety of persons involved in the work activity, instead of leaving the same workers working in an unsafe manner until OHSA takes the necessary action.

Whilst OHSA understands the interests of media and civic minded persons in wanting to raise issues of unsafe work practices, such approach will not reach the effectiveness desired if OHSA is not immediately informed. Most of the time, photos are published hours and even days after the occurrence of the unsafe work practice thus leaving the same person being exposed to serious and imminent danger. OHSA adopts a confidentiality complaint reporting procedure in order to secure the confidentiality of the complainant.

Occupational health and safety is a complex subject which requires the cooperation of stakeholders and duty holders and it can only be improved through a self-regulating process where all duty holders recognize that it is in their best interest to adhere to their duties imposed by law.

In terms of the OHSA Act XXVII of 2000 and other subsidiary regulations, employers have various legal obligations that must be fulfilled in order to manage health and safety at the place of work. Employers have the general duty of ensuring the health and safety at all times of all persons who may be affected by the work being carried out for such employers. This duty is considered to be wide in its scope and encompasses a series of other obligations intended to fulfill such general duty.

Employers must have in place appropriate arrangements for the effective planning, organization, control, monitoring and review of the preventive and protective measures. The approach to be taken by employers must be based on a well-defined management system based on prevention in particular through the provision of risk assessments and implementation of control measures based on the general principles of prevention laid down in the OHSA Act. The general principles of prevention are set out in descending order of preference with the best approach being the adequate control of risk. These principles are intended to secure the best approach to address hazards and risks which may be present in the place of work.

On the other hand, workers have also a number of duties that must be fulfilled in order to ensure a safer and healthier workplace. Workers have the duty to cooperate with their employer in matters pertaining to health and safety and to safeguard their own health and safety and that of other who may be affected by their actions.

With regards to construction work activities, OHSA urges all duty holders to adopt a risk prevention approach from the beginning. This can be only achieved if all duty holders in particular the client, contractors, project supervisors and workers themselves adopt a collective approach towards the implementation of control measures intended to prevent accidents at the place of work.