

Use of Scaffolds as Fall Arrest Anchorages

TO: All Users, Owners and Distributors of Supported Scaffolds

RE: The Use of Scaffolds as an Anchorage for Personal Fall Arrest Systems

The Scaffolding, Shoring and Forming Institute (SSFI) is an industry association comprising designers and manufacturers of scaffolding, shoring, and forming products. For many years, members of the SSFI have been familiar with, and have been very active in, the engineering and standards development work associated with fall arrest equipment.

SSFI members have become aware of the increased use of scaffolds as fall arrest anchorages. This practice is a matter of concern for SSFI members because scaffold systems and components were not designed or manufactured specifically to withstand fall arrest forces. Very few scaffold components will meet the federal OSHA requirement of 5,000 pounds for a personal fall arrest system anchorage.

Personal Fall Arrest Systems (PFAS) should, if possible, be attached to a permanent structure. It is the position of SSFI members that no PFAS should be anchored to a scaffold component unless a Qualified Person, as that term is used in 29 CFR1926.451, has determined such use to be feasible and safe, or the manufacturer has approved such use in writing. The instructions of a Qualified Person or manufacturer concerning the use of a scaffold component as a PFAS anchorage should be followed exactly.

This Technical Bulletin was prepared by members of the Scaffold & Access Industry Association SSFI Committee.

SSFI is a committee comprising manufacturers of shoring, scaffolding, forming, and suspended scaffolding. The committee focuses on engineering and safety aspects of scope products.

This bulletin does not purport to be all-inclusive nor to supplant or replace other additional safety and precautionary measures to cover usual or unusual conditions. If this bulletin conflicts in any way with a state, local, federal, or other government statute or regulation, said statute or regulation shall supersede this bulletin and it shall be the responsibility of each user to comply therewith. This bulletin has been developed as an aid to users of various types of scaffolding equipment. The Scaffold & Access Industry Association or their SSFI Committee members are not responsible for the use of this bulletin.

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