**Falls from Vehicles**

As a result of the discussion that took place at the last Health and safety Forum meeting on the 21st January and an e mail from David Ford I have now had a conversation with the material supplier concerned.

Below is a synopsis of the conversation.

Having spoken to the company concerned they have told me that their logistics manager has come back and said;

*All our hauliers know this is not a safe working practice and should not be climbing on the top layer of packs within our yard or any other site. Unfortunately as we all know, managing unsupervised staff / drivers is almost impossible, we have to rely on them following the guidelines & rules we have trained them in. If this particular site (or any other) can supply the vehicle registration or date of delivery they will speak to the haulier concerned and have the driver spoken too and re trained on safe working practices. They will also speak to all of their hauliers and use this as an example and reiterate them H&S requirements.*

Below is a summary of the history surrounding this with the material supplier and the developer. I should stress as told to me by the material supplier.

From the Manufacturer.

*Our Risk Delivery Method Statement does allow for drivers to access the back of the truck and to climb on the first layer of blocks to allow them to remove the spacer blocks that keep the load stable during transportation. We view the use of these spacer blocks as an essential element in helping to ensure a stable load. Without the spacers our belief is that packs of blocks can shift during transportation with the possible result that the load becomes so unstable that it falls from the truck.  This is clearly a situation that we want to avoid. The authority responsible for ensuring compliance with safe transportation of goods on the road is VOSA and we believe our current method for transporting goods meets their requirements.*

*Given that we need to use spacer blocks to ensure a stable load the question is then how to remove these once the vehicle has arrived at its delivery location.  We have assessed the risks and we believe that if drivers follow the instructions given in the method statement that they are not contravening health and safety requirements as we have mitigated the risks involved in removing the spacers prior to unloading.*

From the Developer:

* *They feel the Method Statement and Risk Assessment does not comply with the guidance given by the HSE to prevent Falls from Vehicles, i.e.*
* *Plan loading and unloading to avoid the need to work at height on the vehicle.*
* *Look for good, well designed access when purchasing vehicles.*
* *Retro-fit equipment if necessary.*
* *Provide protective equipment such as slip- resistant safety footwear.*
* *Keep equipment in good order.*
* *Respond to ideas for preventing falls from vehicles.*
* *Make sure supervisors check how people are getting on and off vehicles*

The solution offered by the manufacturer:

*If you instruct us that you do not feel our method of unloading is safe, then we are happy for your sites to take the responsibility to unload our vehicles using their fork lift truck. By adopting this method we can remove the current requirement for the driver to access the back of the truck. Use of the fork lift will however will require loads to be palletised. Currently, the majority of loads that we deliver to sites do come on pallets, however some do not, so these would require additional pallets to be ordered.  Please let us know if you would like to pursue the palletised option?  If you do, we will instruct our internal sales department accordingly and we will add a note to the deliveries that drivers are not to access the back of the lorry. Clearly regions will also need to be informed of the need to order additional pallets for loads that currently do not have them and be instructed to make the fork lift truck available when we deliver.*

From the photo provided it would appear that the blocks were on pallets and these could have been taken off without anybody getting onto the lorry.

Nevertheless, the guy in the photos who also appears to be wearing a baseball cap is in the wrong.