

Watch Out for Risk in Routine Work

In June 2026, five workplace accidents resulted in seven fatalities. This brings the total number of workplace fatalities to 21 so far this year, compared with 18 over the same period last year. While the overall number of workplace fatalities have remained relatively stable, the WSH Council would like to alert the industry to heighten vigilance and strengthen workplace safety measures to prevent further injuries and loss of life.

To reinforce safe work practices, the Ministry of Manpower announced on 26 June the following measures:

- Nation-wide call for a voluntary Safety Time-Out
- Increased composition fines
- Increased minimum Stop-Work Order duration from five to eight weeks
- Debarment from hiring new migrant workers for three months for companies found with lapses resulting in fatal or serious accidents

The seven fatal cases occurred across different industries and work activities, including platform work, boat operations, loading/unloading and maintenance works (refer to Annex). Although the circumstances differed, they share a common lesson: workplace accidents can happen not only during high-risk operations, but also while carrying out routine and repetitive work. Loss of life could have been prevented if simple safety steps were followed, such as:

- Maintaining a proper lookout when operating machinery or vehicles;
- Wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment;
- Securing of vehicle parking brakes before alighting; and
- Ensuring machinery is fully de-energised before working on or nearby moving parts.

Routine work should never be taken for granted; familiarity should never lead to complacency. Lack of situational awareness, shortcuts or being distracted in day-to-day work can have serious consequences.

Shared Responsibilities of Companies and Employees

Both employers and employees have a responsibility to uphold safety at work.

Employers should:

- Ensure workers only carry out work that they have been trained and authorised to perform.
- Conduct thorough briefings to workers on onsite risks and control measures in place before starting work.
- Ensure established safe work procedures are followed at all times and that safety measures are not bypassed or shortcuts taken, even for routine tasks.
- Implement and rehearse emergency response and evacuation plans.
- Ensure incidents are promptly escalated, e.g. to the safety officer, supervisors or emergency responders, where appropriate. Prompt action may save a life.

Employees should:

- Follow established safe work procedures at all times. Do not take shortcuts, even for routine tasks.
- Recognise that risks can arise during every stage of a work activity, including preparatory and supporting activities such as vehicle parking, housekeeping or equipment setup.
- Pause before starting work to assess whether conditions remain safe and whether any changes require additional precautions.
- Stay focused, do not be distracted and maintain situational awareness throughout tasks.
- Speak up and report to supervisors or relevant personnel if something does not seem right.

Employees play a critical role in safeguarding their own safety and that of their co-workers. The WSH Council urges employees to adopt the “**I CHOOSE SAFETY**” mindset and practise “**LOOK-THINK-DO**” before every task, whether routine or complex. Taking a moment to identify hazards, think through the work and carry it out safely can help prevent serious incidents.

LOOK out for danger

THINK of how you can protect yourself and others

DO your work safely

Annex: Summary of Workplace Fatalities in June 2026

	Date	Accident Description	Number of Fatalities
1	6 June 2026	A delivery rider was riding his motorcycle when he collided into the rear of a stationary lorry that had broken down on the road.	1

2	12 June 2026	Three crew members drowned when the workboat they were on sank after it collided with a landing craft in the sea.	3
3	19 June 2026	A driver tried to stop his truck when it rolled down a slope. However, he was subsequently trapped between his truck and another stationary vehicle.	1
4	20 June 2026	A rigger was hit by an excavator arm while rigging bundles of reinforcement bars (rebar) for subsequent lifting on a trailer bed.	1
5	21 June 2026	A worker was crushed by the discharge gate of a concrete mixer unit which suddenly closed on him while he was doing maintenance work below the mixer.	1