

## FACT SHEET

# CAUTION - CEILING BATTENS DO NOT PROVIDE FALL PROTECTION

It has come to our attention that some builders are using or are considering using ceiling battens as a method of fall protection when working on the roofing structure of the building. Both metal and timber ceiling battens are generally a lightweight element designed to provide support for ceiling linings and not to sustain the loads imposed by a person falling.

The *Best Practice Guidelines for Working on Roofs* was released in June 2012 and outlines how people working on roofs can meet their obligations under the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992. Builders, roofers and other trades must plan for a safe approach to working at height and select an appropriate solution for the job to be completed safely.

These guidelines provide details on a range of solutions that can be used, including reducing the spacing between purlins/roofing battens at a maximum of 500mm.

**Please note that this only refers to purlins and battens as part of the roofing structure not the ceiling structure (see photo).**

The guideline provides a decision tree for preventing falls from roofs which covers the most common roofing situations that could be encountered. The decision tree is only a prompt and detailed guidance is outlined throughout these guidelines as well as the Best Practice Guidelines for Working at Heights in New Zealand.



Where Inspectors find builders are relying on ceiling battens as a method of fall protection a **Prohibition Notice** will be issued requiring the builder to use a safer method of working such as temporary work platforms, safety mesh and soft landing systems.

**If you have any questions about this notice, please contact WorkSafe NZ 0800 030 040.**

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