

ITEM 20 (Suppl.)
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 55
COUNCIL MEETING Aug. 15/77

Re: SAFETY NETS DURING CONSTRUCTION
OF PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS

The following report from the Deputy Chief Building Inspector contains information on an inquiry on safety nets that was made by Council on August 2, 1977.

This is for the information of Council.

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August 15, 1977.

Mr. M.J. Shelley,
MUNICIPAL MANAGER.

Subject: Safety Nets During Construction
of Pedestrian Overpass

At its meeting on August 2, 1977, Council requested that the Chief Building Inspector report on the question of the use of safety nets during the period of construction of an overpass over a highway.

Discussion with Mr. Hal Dennis, Regional Safety Officer of the B.C. Department of Highways and with the supervisory staff of Bird Construction Company Limited, confirms the fact that such projects as the Canada Way pedestrian overpass fall under the jurisdiction of the Workers' Compensation Board. Section 34, "Construction Procedures" of the Board's Accident Prevention Regulations requires that workmen shall be protected from injury through falling from unguarded portion of the perimeter of structures at all elevations ten feet or more above grade. Such protection shall be afforded by means of barriers, guard-rails, fibre or wire guard ropes, safety-belts and life lines, personnel safety nets, or other effective means. In this particular case the contractor has chosen to comply with the regulations through the use of safety-belts and life lines and it is understood from the contractor that the current practices of the workmen on the project are acceptable to the Board's inspectors who visit the site.

The need for protection of vehicles and members of the public who may be exposed to the hazard of construction material or equipment accidentally dropped from the working level of such an overpass is not clearly defined. The

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Canadian Construction Safety Code which forms part of the National Building Code of Canada provides for the protection of the public adjacent to building construction sites; however, the application of the Code does not extend to cover overpasses or bridge construction. Regulations governing this aspect of construction do not appear to exist. Mr. Dennis advises that in instances where protective platforms have been used for such purposes, the hazard from the protective system is often greater than the hazard from the working level itself and the effectiveness of such measures is consequently discounted. He points to the recognized need for traffic signs to provide advance warning to motorists concerning the possibility of dropped construction material and the advisability of rerouting traffic from lane to lane as construction proceeds across such a structure. Otherwise, the matter is left to the discretion of the contractor and to his insurance advisor.

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