

## The J Brand Monthly Technology Update

### Dan Little: No Compromise on Health & Safety

Without wanting to be a repeat of the morning papers it is clearly a difficult time for all businesses and the majority of us are looking at ways to drive efficiencies into our companies, ultimately in a bid to reduce costs and ensure that we are working more efficiently. Dan Little, in his role as Commercial Director, has been tasked with this at J Brand and has already completed training sessions with all operatives and staff to ensure that the company is aligned in it's thoughts and processes for the year ahead. There is however one area of which J Brand is not prepared to reduce expenditure — Health & Safety. With new legislation being implemented on a regular basis and with the economy literally forcing people into cost reduction, it may appear tempting for some to take a view on their approach to H&S — this is quite the opposite at J Brand. We have decided that the traditional non peak period for us is the optimum time to ensure our workforce has all the training and updates required to ensure safe working at all times, regardless of cost. Over the past 6 months J Brand have also been successful in becoming CHAS, SAFE Contractor & CDM Competent — Eurosafe UK approved. Furthermore all operatives and staff have valid ECS (Electrotechnical Certification — CSCS card scheme). The associated tests are monitored and completed by in-house Invigilators to maintain the validity of the cards at all times. Taking H&S seriously at all times and assessing works in a proactive manor will not only save un-necessary injuries and lives, but can save money for us all — increasing productivity associated with H&S delays and saving unnecessary abortive costs. We can provide you with support & assistance on all H&S matters.

Issue 14, February 2009

***“It is a duty of an employer to provide training, sufficient timescales for work and constant support to all staff & operatives; we will never be forced into working in an environment that is not safe— there is always a sensible resolution and we will always endeavour to find one”***

Dan Little, J Brand Commercial Director

### Asbestos Regulations

*Did you know property owners have a duty to record whether their property has any asbestos containing materials (ACM's) ? Failure to adhere to this not only goes against owners responsibilities, but could put people at an unnecessary risk. It may also result in abortive and delayed costs during planned installation works. If you are concerned, please do not hesitate to contact us — we can help arrange the necessary surveys or just provide advice on your next steps...*

## Have you got a ‘Head for Heights’



*The HSE state — “Employers need to undertake a risk assessment before the works start and only choose steps as the means of access if there are no other reasonable alternatives — it should always be low risk, short duration”.*

In recent times, there has been some confusion in relation to the WAHR (Working at Height Regulation). In short, and in reality, the HSE (Health & Safety Executive) have stated on a number of occasions that steps / ladders are not banned and they do in fact bring out guidance's for their safe use. It must however be remembered that ladders do not prevent or mitigate a fall. All working at height should be avoided unless it is essential. Where essential, relevant risk assessments should take place and equipment used to prevent falls and injury. In practice, in the past, steps have often been considered the first choice and used for very many tasks simply because they are the most convenient. They have been considered an all-purpose piece of access equipment, with other equipment only considered when it is not possible to use steps. In future, to comply with the WAHR and the hierarchy of controls, an almost opposite approach must be taken. It is not acceptable to simply turn up on site with a pair of steps in the van and use them. During planning and prior to the works (or the type of works), works at height must be assessed. The safest type of access equipment which it is reasonably practicable to use must be used. Therefore if a safer alternative is available and it is reasonably practicable to use it, it must be used. Not having a safer alternative available on site is not a sufficient reason for using steps as the WAHR require all works at height to be planned.