**PRESS RELEASE**

The sky is the limit for recently-launched Height Wise Training Academy

*Internationally-recognised safety courses are now available at the recently-launched Height Wise Training Academy, to assist all people working at height in becoming fully-compliant with Occupational Health and Safety laws.*

**1 July, 2011:** Leading height safety consulting and training provider, Height Wise officially-opened its upgraded training academy in Midrand in June 2011, in order to provide essential safety training to workers in South Africa who carry out tasks more than two metres above the ground.

Height Wise is a subsidiary of Skyriders - a market-leader in the provision of expert rope access aided inspection, non-destructive testing (NDT) and high-elevation safety solutions, which also boasts a zero-fatality record throughout its 22-year history.

Height Wise director **Penny Fabricius** points out that the academy has invested more than R60 000 in the infrastructure and equipment of its Midrand-based training facility, which specialises in fall arrest and rope access training. “The new state-of-the-art facility is designed to provide a simulated work at height environment for clients that do not have onsite training facilities available.”

Fabricius points out that the academy was first established in 2007 to assist companies in becoming compliant with the stringent work-at-height laws enforced by the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) of 1993. “Height Wise has to date trained more than 1 200 people from numerous industries including mining, telecommunications and the energy sectors of Africa in the basic principles of fall arrest systems, which are all compliant with the Institute for Work at Height (IWH) and National Qualifications Framework (NFQ) standards,” she continues.

The newly-established training facility is able to accommodate three to four groups of ten when providing fall-arrest training. However, Fabricius notes that only six individuals are trained at a time when receiving intensive rope access training. “Trainees are required to perform an array of manoeuvres and, as a result, space was a significant factor in the design of the facility.”

Fabricius notes that Height Wise employs expert rope access technicians with international hands-on experience as instructors at the training academy; including Skyriders level 3 rope access technician **Jansen Madike**, and level 2 rope access technician **Louis Roodt** – who assisted in the design process of the training facility.

Height Wise Academy offers two fall arrest training courses, namely:
**Level 1:** A basic one-day course which ensures legal compliance at height. Level 1 fall arrest training provides learners with general fall arrest principles and practices.
**Level 2:** An advanced two-day course, which enables the trainee to conduct rescue at height. It is recommended for supervisors in charge of technicians working at height.

The more comprehensive and extensive rope access training courses include:

**Level 1:** Enables the trainee to perform a limited range of rope access tasks and rescues. In order to move from a Level 1 to a Level 2 rope access technician, the trainee must complete a minimum of 750 logged working hours.

**Level 2:** Trainees completing Level 2 will be provided with a Height Wise certificate, which qualifies them to manage the safety of personnel working at height. A minimum of 1 000 working hours must be logged to qualify for Level 3 training.

**Level 3:** This is the highest level of rope access training and all supervisors are required to be Level 3 qualified. This enables them to supervise rope access teams, and to perform advanced manoeuvres and rescues onsite.

Fabricius notes that rope access training is complex and demanding, and the OHSA states that only persons 18 years and older, who are both medically and psychologically-fit, can qualify for the intensive training. “Trainees who meet these criteria are provided with world-class training from expert rope access technicians employed by Skyriders, who have extensive experience in various industries across Africa.”

Skyriders marketing manager **Mike Zinn** notes that Height Wise is among the few training academies in Africa that provides IWS and NFQ-accredited training courses. “By providing training courses that are IWH-approved, Height Wise is providing trainees with the peace-of-mind that they are receiving the highest-quality of standards in safety training. What’s more, the facility is important to Skyriders as it enables the company to ensure that its rope access technicians remain competent; thereby, ensuring that we continue to meet our excellent safety standards.”

He does; however, admit that it is a challenge to highlight the vital importance of this nationally-recognised qualification. “Most corporations are aware of the need for safety training at height, but many are unaware of the different levels of qualifications. Height Wise distinguishes itself from the competition, as the company subscribes to the highest standards imposed by the IWS.

Fabricius notes that in addition to providing dedicated training at its academy, Height Wise also provides training onsite for its clients. “Height Wise is committed to providing onsite training, as it is more cost-effective for the client but more importantly, it provides trainees with a hands-on approach to learning essential safety skills in a ‘real-life’ environment.”

Looking to the future, Fabricius notes that the rapid development of industries across Africa serves as a potential platform for growth. “As industries continue to expand, so too will the demand for safety training. Height Wise has distinguished itself as a reputable leader in providing at height safety solutions training, and I believe that the company is in prime position to gain significant market share, and to establish new training academies across the continent,” she concludes.

***Ends***

**Notes to the Editor**There are numerous photographs specific to this press release. Please visit <http://media.ngage.co.za> and click the Skyriders link.

**About Height Wise**Height Wise Training Academy was established during 2007 to coincide with the development of NQF Unit Standards for rope access and fall arrest, which have been accepted and published by SAQA (South African Qualifications Authority). Height Wise received Service SETA accreditation (Provider accreditation number 2439) and is able to deliver high quality training and assessment for NFQ accredited or customised course in height safety.

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