**PRESS RELEASE**

Height Wise introduces exclusive safety material to its training courses

*Safety consulting and training experts, Height Wise and Ascentech, have joined forces to improve the safety of South African employees who are working at more than 2 m above ground.*

**01 June, 2012:** Leading height safety consulting and training provider, Height Wise Training Academy, has launched a new training programme that provides clients with comprehensive and up-to-date information on how to remain fully-compliant with Occupational Health and Safety laws.

Height Wise is the exclusive provider of the new-and-improved fall protection plan training material, which was written by Ascentech Safety Consultancy – a specialist in the management and implementation of fall protection plans for businesses across South Africa, notes Academy director **Penny Fabricius**.

“The training manual contains new and detailed information that enables clients to assess their work site, and to prepare for a fall protection plan that ensures that all staff members – who are working at more than two metres above ground – receive sufficient at-height safety training as prescribed under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) 85 of 1993,” she explains.

Ascentech director **Louis Roodt** notes that the concept of fall protection plans have evolved over the years, and a number of training manuals today are obsolete. “The way fall protection plans were written in the past has changed. Instead of merely forcing large volumes of information on trainees, the Ascentech manual is written systematically, in order to ensure that they are not required to trawl through irrelevant information, but rather identify what they are specifically looking for.”

Roodt points out that Ascentech was established in February 2011, due to the lack of sufficient training material being produced locally. “South Africa has been crying out for better fall protection training programmes, and Ascentech was able to devise a format which is sensible and user-friendly,” he continues.

Fabricius stresses the importance of fall protection plans, especially as Health and Safety laws in South Africa become increasingly-stringent. “The Department of Labour is placing more emphasis on enforcing these laws and, as a result, most government departments now insist on safety competency certificates being produced before any tender is awarded.”

Fabricius highlights the fact that a number of companies in South Africa are lagging behind in the safety field, and have safety officers who are not properly trained. “The training programme is specifically-targeted at site supervisors, project managers and safety officers, as it documents the necessary procedures that are required for compliance. What’s more, we teach our clients to write a fall protection plan, while ensuring that they develop an effective training management system that ensures the safe cataloguing of all employee training records.”

Height Wise provides training at its academy in Midrand; however, the company encourages all clients to undertake training onsite. “Height Wise is committed to providing all training onsite, 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.

Electrical high-voltage construction specialist Molalatladi Electrical recently adopted the new Height Wise training programme in early 2012. Managing director **Leon Prinsloo** points out that employee safety training is vitally-important to Molalatladi Electrical, as the company undertakes more than half of its projects at heights varying between 20 m and 47 m.

“Molalatladi Electrical specialises in doing refurbishment projects on existing substations for a large parastatal client, and safety of our employees is of the utmost importance, as they often work from aerial baskets that are mounted to cranes on trucks, which are located in yards ranging between 132 kV and 765 kV,” he explains.

Prinsloo highlights the fact that the training material provided by Height Wise has given Molalatladi Electrical a better understanding of its responsibility towards its employees. “The training material provided by Height Wise has given us a good framework on how to compile a sufficient fall protection plan, which improves the safety of our employees, while ensuring that we are fully-compliant to submit future tenders.”

Molalatladi Electrical was recently awarded a contract for the stringing of aluminium conductors between 24-m-high steel structures that located between 50 m and 70 m apart, at substations located in Gauteng and the Northern Cape respectively.

“The Height Wise fall protection training programme has kept Molalatladi Electrical up-to-date with the latest safety trends, and this has ultimately ensured that we are able to remain a preferred supplier of services in a highly-competitive industry,” he adds.

Looking to the future, Fabricius, optimistic of growth prospects for Height Wise across Africa. “Height Wise has already established itself as a reputable leader in providing at height safety solutions training. Through the continued implementation of Ascentech’s exclusive material on all of our new fall protection plan training courses, I believe that we can consolidate on that success moving forward, especially as large amounts of businesses across Africa become increasingly safety-conscious,” she concludes.

Height Wise was established in 2007 and 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.

***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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