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## **No.78** **Safe Use of Portable Ladders for Close-up Surveys** (Sep. 2002)

1. The Owner should ensure that equipment selected for temporary work affords adequate protection against the risks of falls from a height.
2. The manner in which portable ladders can most safely be used by workers should be specified.
3. Portable ladders should rest on a stable, strong, suitably sized, immobile footing so that the rungs remain horizontal. Suspended ladders should be attached in a manner so that they can not be displaced and so that swinging is prevented.
4. The feet of portable ladders should be prevented from slipping during use by securing the stiles at or near their upper and lower ends, by any anti-slip device or by other arrangements of equivalent effectiveness. Slip resistant feet should not be used as substitute for the care in placing, lashing or holding a ladder upon slippery surface.
5. Portable ladders should meet the following criteria:
  - Not more than 5 m in length for freestanding portable ladders.
  - Non-self supporting and self-supporting portable ladders should support at least four times the maximum intended load.
  - The minimum clear distance between side rails for all portable ladders should be according to a recognized standard.
  - The rungs and steps of portable ladders should be designed to minimise slipping, e.g. corrugated, knurled, dimpled, coated with skid resistance material.
6. Ladders should be maintained free of oil, grease and other slipping hazards.

