

of Scaffolding of the intention to commence the cleaning of buildings or windows where any person engaged in such work is likely to incur the risk of a fall of 12 ft. or more, or of intention to commence the digging of any shaft or well more than 5 ft. in depth. The extension to timber-stacking is to enable this work to be supervised and inspected and unsuitable gear and equipment dealt with, but notice of stacking is not required. Regulations covering the protection of window-cleaners and well-sinkers under the new amendment to the Act are being prepared.

(2) Notices received, inspections made, and requisitions served over the last four years are as follows :—

	1945-46.	1946-47.	1947-48.	1948-49.
Notices of intention to erect buildings and scaffolding, and commence excavations	3,980	4,050	3,916	6,013
Inspections made	6,842	8,484	10,384	16,033
Requisitions served	..	2	2	22

The increase in inspections is a reflection of the success in recruiting and training additional Inspectors, and the wider coverage of districts other than the four main centres.

(3) Despite the fact that this Act is an old-established one, reports from Inspectors indicate that, except in the main centres, many contractors disregard or are unaware of their responsibilities under the Act, particularly in relation to small jobs, but increased attention to these areas by Inspectors is bringing greater understanding of the Act. Part of the difficulty may be due to the influx to the building trade of new contractors who have little capital and who endeavour to carry on with as little plant as possible and the minimum of scaffolding timber. Moreover, these contractors are frequently unaware of the full requirements of the Act, but they readily co-operate when Inspectors explain its provisions. In one district the condition of swinging stages gave concern, and some of the gear was condemned on inspection. Considerable improvement followed this action. The provisions of the 1948 Amendment Act gave authority to Inspectors of Scaffolding to ensure the safety of timber stacks and Inspectors found it necessary to order reductions in the height of a number of stacks.

(4) In one large district a talk on the Act and regulations was given at the annual meeting of master builders, and lectures were given to building-trade trainees in the Rehabilitation Department's carpentry schools. Several districts have endeavoured to spread a wider knowledge of the legal requirements by sending free copies of the regulations to all members of the Master Builders' Association.

(5) Tables XIX and XX in the Appendix show scaffolding accidents by age-groups and cause of accident and compare the totals of recent years. There were 2 fatal accidents in 1948, as follows :—

A worker who was climbing up to a swinging stage fell when a lighting bracket on which he placed his weight pulled away.

A stack of timber on which a man was working collapsed and fell on him, inflicting fatal injuries.

(n) *Annual Holidays Act, 1944*

(1) The majority of employers and employees are now familiar with the requirements of the Act, and the only difficulties in administration are associated with the definition of "ordinary pay" (concerning which many inquiries are received, and a number of Court decisions have been given), the treatment of short-service employees, and the general unpopularity of holiday cards used in respect of engagements of less than three months' duration.