

Lifting operations

Reason	Lifting operations, whether large or small, complex or seemingly straightforward, can, if they go wrong, result in accidents and injuries that may include fatalities.
Outline	This talk provides an overview of lifting operations and the things you need to know to keep safe.



Portable manual material lift



Telehandlers should have, and follow, a lift plan



Lifting operations should be planned and appropriately supervised



Pre-use checks should be carried out on all forms of lifting equipment



If you are involved in any lifting operations, you must be briefed on the contents of the lift plan before work starts.

Lifting operations can, and do, go wrong, so you need to remain vigilant even if you are not directly involved.

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Examples of lifting operations

1. Cranes, including tower cranes, mobile cranes and specialist spider cranes.
2. Excavators used for lifting and lowering.
3. Telehandlers and forklifts.
4. Material mast hoists, builders' bumpy hoists, gantry hoists and gin wheels.
5. Portable manual material lifts.
6. People being lifted in a mobile elevating work platform (MEWP).

Hazards

1. Lifting equipment can become unstable and collapse or overturn due to overloading, or because the ground or structure it bears on fails.
2. People can be struck or crushed by moving parts of the lifting equipment (such as a crane's rear counterweight rotating), or struck by moving loads.
3. Lifting accessories (such as chains, strops and hooks) can fail, resulting in falling materials.
4. The load or parts of the load can fall off, due to incorrect slinging or poor load security.
5. Adverse weather (such as high winds) can make lifting operations difficult and unsafe.
6. Unauthorised or untrained persons could attempt to carry out lifting operations or enter an exclusion zone.
7. People could use incorrect equipment or methods to get the job done.

Planning lifting operations

1. Only trained, competent and authorised persons should be involved.
2. All lifting operations should be planned and appropriately supervised, so they are carried out safely.
3. The plan should result in a safe system of work and can take the form of a risk assessment, method statement or a lift plan.
4. Exclusion zones should be in place to protect other workers from lifting equipment and loads. Exclusion zones allow those directly involved to focus on the job.
5. There are strict legal requirements concerning the thorough examination of lifting equipment and lifting accessories.
 - Lifting equipment (such as cranes and hoists) must be thoroughly examined at intervals not exceeding 12 months (six months if used for lifting persons).
 - Lifting accessories (such as strops, chains and shackles) must be thoroughly examined at intervals not exceeding six months.



What is a lift plan?

What is an exclusion zone?

Will lifting operations affect your planned work (such as deliveries and different access routes)?



Now inform your workers of the company policy regarding lifting operations on site.