

HSE Bulletin (Ref.:26 in 2013)

Stamping out unsafe practices

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Following visits to LU sites, the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) has raised concerns regarding working practices and failures to establish Safe Systems of Work. The practices outlined below are unacceptable to LU and it is concerning that those on site tolerated the practices witnessed by the ORR. The ORR found the following:

Vehicle / Pedestrian segregation

- Persons in very close proximity to working machines (excavators, dozers, dumpers) who were in danger of being struck by the machine,
- Machine controllers failing to exclude people from the working area,
- Communications equipment not working or working intermittently, and
- Persons attaching lifting chains to equipment with the machine arm moving.

Action required: Implementation and enforcement of exclusion zones in proximity to moving machines

Working at Height

- A person carrying a chainsaw on top of 4 high loaded track panels with no fall prevention measures in place,
- Persons climbing and standing on top of the 4 high track panels in order to strap the load down,
- No fall edge protection or safety harnesses in place, and
- No need to complete these tasks at height in the first place.

Action required: Work at height to be reviewed to ensure alternative working practices at ground level are adopted where feasible, and that fall prevention measures are in place where required

Defective Equipment on Machinery

- Excavators and dozers found to have defective safety equipment such as reversing cameras and load indicators that had been reported in the fault book but not repaired.
- It was also noticed that the rated capacity indicator (RCI) 'override key' was in place and was bent back in its switch position on one excavator.

Action required: Pre-delivery and pre-use checks to be carried out. Dynamic risk assessments to be applied to determine whether equipment remains safe to use with additional controls in place, or should be rejected.

Planning of Lifting Operations and type of machines used

- On many occasions, the RCI fitted to excavators was heard to go off during the tandem lifting operations.
- The impact of environmental factors such as wet ground which created suction hadn't been fully considered.
- Industry developed guidance on the selection of machines based on their lifting capability had not been followed.

Action required: The impact of environmental conditions on the capability of the machine should be factored in to the selection of lifting equipment

As they have previously raised similar concerns with LU and its suppliers, these events have changed the ORR's outlook and approach.

- Inspectors will be required to justify why they didn't issue a Prohibition or Improvement Notice when a repeat unsafe work practice is seen.
- Further observation of any of the above items is likely to result in formal regulatory action.
- ORR Inspectors will now be making unannounced visits to site.

We are significantly increasing the risk of serious injury to our colleagues if we fail to stop unsafe working.

Action required:

- ***Safe Systems of Work must be in place,***
- ***Where unsafe practices are observed, they must not be tolerated and work must be stopped, and***
- ***Key risk controls that are either not working / not fit for purpose / not being applied / not aligned with production or being over ridden by custom and practice must be reported.***

We all have a responsibility in this, whether it be through assessing risk, developing systems of work, managing programmes and resources, supervising the work, doing the work, inspecting and checking it and not walking by unsafe working.

Incident reference	N/A
For more information contact	Tony Jessop, HSE Senior Manager Infrastructure
Approved by (HSE Snr Manager):	Catherine Behan, Head of HSE Capital Programmes
