



Work Safety Alert Struck to Death by a Metal I-beam

1. **Date of Accident :** April 2020
2. **Place of Accident :** A construction site
3. **Summary :**

A worker while operating an excavator with remote control in a basement under construction was struck to death by an unfixed overhead I-beam which was caused to displace and fall by the excavator arm.

4. **Work Safety Alert for Contractors/ Employers :**

To prevent any workers/ employees from being endangered by the operation of a moving plant such as an excavator on a construction site, contractors/ employers responsible for the work should provide and maintain a safe system of work which should include, but not limited to, the followings:

- appointing a competent person to conduct task-specific risk assessments to identify all potential hazards associated with the work, taking into account the limitations and restrictions of the plant to be used; ground profile and condition at the work location; work requirements; and competency of the work team, particularly the proximity hazards at the work location with limited headroom;
- formulating safe work methods and procedures for the work with due regard to the results of risk assessments, and following the requirements of safety legislation, relevant codes of practice and safety guidelines;
- inspecting the work area before the operation to identify any presence of overhang and obstacles that may cause hazard to the workers involved;
- checking headroom and clearances to ensure that no unsafe condition



occurs while operating the plant especially at a restrictive place;

- fencing off the operating zone of the plant as far as reasonably practicable with suitable warning notices displayed and adopting control measures to prevent any unauthorized entry into the fenced-off area;
- ensuring that any unfixed structures and any parts thereof at the vicinity are properly and securely supported to prevent any unintended movement;
- ensuring that no workers/ employees work, pass or stay underneath the unfixed structures and any parts thereof;
- ensuring that sufficient visibility of the surrounding is available from the operator's position to enable safe operation of the plant;
- providing sufficient illumination if the plant is operated in an area with insufficient natural lighting or of poor visibility condition;
- ensuring that the plant is only operated by a person who holds a valid relevant certificate where applicable and who is able to operate the plant safely by virtue of his experience and competence;
- providing all workers/ employees involved with necessary safety information, instruction and training to ensure that they are familiar with the safe work procedures and relevant safety measures; and
- establishing and implementing an effective monitoring and control system to ensure all safety measures are strictly followed.

5. Reference :

- [Safe Systems of Work](#)¹
- [Five Steps to Risk Assessment](#)¹
- [Five Steps to Information, Instruction and Training](#)¹

¹ Click to view document



- [Code of Practice on Safe Use of Excavators](#)¹
- [Guidance Notes on Safe Use of Loadshifting Machines for Earth Moving Operations on Construction Sites](#)¹

DISCLAIMER

This Work Safety Alert (“the Alert”) is issued at the earliest possible opportunity after a serious accident with a view to drawing the attention of interested parties to the general safety precautionary measures necessary to protect people engaging in similar work activities. The material contained in the Alert constitutes general guidance only. It does not reduce, limit, or replace, any legal obligations upon any person to comply with any statutory duties under relevant legislation. Users such as Managers and Supervisors should make their own evaluation of the information contained in the Alert to determine if it can be applied to their own situations and practices. The Labour Department does NOT accept any responsibilities for any loss or damage resulting from the use of or failure to use of the information on the Alert.

Note: The material contained in the Alert is not exhaustive, and will be supplemented/ adjusted where necessary if more relevant information comes to light.

¹ [Click to view document](#)