



Work Safety Alert Trapped by Bundles of Wooden Battens

1. **Date of Accident :** June 2020
2. **Place of Accident :** A timber store
3. **Summary :**

A worker while operating a gantry crane by means of a pendant control panel to move a bundle of wooden battens was somehow struck by the bundle being lifted, who was then trapped between it and other bundles of wooden battens in a pile nearby. The worker sustained serious injury and passed away on the following day.

4. **Work Safety Alert for Owners/ Proprietors/ Employers :**

To safeguard any person from being struck by any object being raised/ lowered/ suspended by a lifting appliance, such as a gantry crane, with pendant or remote control, the owner of the lifting appliance/ proprietor/ employer should provide and maintain a safe system of work which should include, but not limited to, the following:

- appointing a competent person to conduct task-specific risk assessments to identify all potential hazards associated with the lifting operation, taking into account the size, shape, weight, centre of gravity and packing arrangement of the loads and the slinging/ rigging method, with particular attention paid to any unintended movement/ displacement of the loads being handled and the trapping hazard in restrictive work environment;
- formulating a lifting plan with due consideration to the risk assessment's results, including the selection of a suitable lifting appliance/ lifting gear as well as the competence of the workers/ employees involved, and following the requirements of relevant safety legislation, codes of practice and guidelines to minimise the risks exposed to the workers/



employees;

- appointing a competent and experienced lifting supervisor to oversee the lifting operation to ensure that all risks are effectively reduced/managed;
- taking care of the safety of all workers involved and other persons who may be affected by the lifting operation, including the proper fencing off of all lifting zones with suitable warning notices displayed as far as reasonably practicable;
- where it is not reasonably practicable to fence off the lifting zones, taking effective measures, such as appointment of sufficient watch-out personnel, to ensure that no unauthorised entry into the zones;
- providing a tag line or control rope for control of any undue swing or rotation of the loads where necessary;
- ensuring that the lifting appliance has been certified in safe working order through tests and thorough examinations by a competent examiner and regular inspections by a competent person before putting in use for the lifting operation;
- ensuring that every chain, rope or other lifting gear to be used for lifting is tested, thoroughly examined and certified safe by a competent examiner, and a valid certificate in the approved form in which the competent examiner has made a statement to the effect that it is in safe working order has been obtained;
- in case of a crane, ensuring that the crane is only operated by a person who holds a valid certificate relevant to the type of the crane;
- appointing a signaller where the operator does not have a clear and unrestricted view of the load and its vicinity;
- providing all workers/ employees involved in the lifting operation with adequate information, instruction and training to ensure that they are familiar with the safe work procedures and safety measures; and



- establishing and implementing an effective monitoring and control system to ensure strict compliance with all the above safety measures.

5. Reference :

- [Safe Systems of Work](#)¹
- [Five Steps to Risk Assessment](#)¹
- [Five Steps to Information, Instruction and Training](#)¹
- [A Guide to the Factories and Industrial Undertakings \(Lifting Appliances and Lifting Gear\) Regulation](#)¹
- [Guidance Notes on Inspection, Thorough Examination and Testing of Lifting Appliances and Lifting Gear](#)¹
- [Code of Practice for Safe Use of Mobile Cranes](#)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.

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