

New CPA guidance projects

The CPA's Strategic Forum Plant Safety Group has begun work on a guidance project for site management, supervisors and operators to prevent inadvertent operation of the controls on general construction equipment, including telehandlers. It will also revise its guidance on using excavators to lift loads.



Lifting loads with an excavator is not its principle function

Excavators for lifting

The CPA is planning to revise its 'Lifting Operations in Construction when Using Excavators' guidance which was first published in 2008 and updated in 2009.

The use of excavators for lifting operations, particularly on construction sites, has become more common over the last few years. Excavators and backhoes are designed for rapid earth moving and are not for lifting loads. The guidance suggests that when planning a lifting operation, you should firstly consider whether an excavator is the most appropriate machine, taking into account the type of lift and the duration of the task. Topics for revision and new additions to the guidance include definition of rated object handling, requirements for excavators equipped for lifting, rated lift capacity indicator issues and hazardous location issues including roads and railways.



The UK Strategic Forum Plant Safety Group has begun work on guidance to prevent inadvertent operation of controls on construction equipment

Inadvertent operation of controls

Last year the UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) published its results on the inadvertent operation of controls on excavators and mobile equipment. During the course of its research the HSE interviewed a number of operators, many of whom said that they had either experienced these types of incidents first-hand, or had seen it happen on site, sometimes with horrific consequences including fatalities. One example involved an operator who was climbing down from his crawler mounted excavator, when his coat got caught on the track drive lever which started them running, causing his foot to become trapped underneath the machine.

Although the HSE research concentrated on excavators, many of the issues raised are common to other construction equipment such as telehandlers. Some incidents were attributed to operator behaviour, reaching for other controls/items or moving around the cab etc... while other factors included the operator being distracted, and issues relating to control layout. For the operator, there are a number of simple actions that can be taken to minimise the risk. The first is to avoid loose clothing, as bulky high-visibility overcoats can easily catch on a joystick or track drive lever, particularly when twisting around in the cab or getting in and out of the machine.

For site supervision and management, there are a range of issues they should consider, including how instructions are communicated to the operator, ensuring that there is adequate time for them to operate the machine and get out carefully, and making sure that there is always proper separation between the machine and other people on site.

The full report can be downloaded from the HSE website: www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrhtm/rr1000.htm

Although the report does not cover aerial work platforms or remote controls, the Strategic Forum Plant Safety Group is inviting readers to share their experiences or incidents of inadvertent operation of controls with the working group. This can be done on the Strategic Forum Plant Safety Group page of the CPA website: www.cpa.uk.net/sfpg

CPA at Vertikal Days

CPA will once again exhibit at Vertikal Days this year, which is being held at Haydock Park on the 13th -14th May.

On the first day of the show the association will hold a Strategic Forum Plant Safety Group Outreach Meeting. Discussion topics will cover telehandlers, including new work on suspended loads, and the recently published guidance on ground conditions, as well as operator competence, medical fitness and the public health responsibility deal. CPA's new

projects on inadvertent operation of controls and lifting with excavators will also be covered.

The CPA is also planning a number of small round table briefings on its stand, covering popular topics such as ground conditions etc... To register for the Outreach Meeting, visit the Strategic Forum Plant Safety Group page on the CPA website: www.cpa.uk.net/sfpg



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