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# £407k for crane fatality

UK electromagnet manufacturing company Tesla Engineering has been fined £400,000 plus costs of £7,546 following the death of an employee in an overhead crane incident in March 2018.

Craig McEwan, 34, a unit manager at Tesla was working on top of a tank, at the facility in Storrington, West Sussex, when he was caught between a moving overhead gantry crane and a metal chimney, suffering fatal crush injuries. The company had only recently installed the metal chimney to the top of the tank, increasing the height at which staff had to work. However, no measures were put in place to ensure that the crane was not operated while employees were working on the tank.

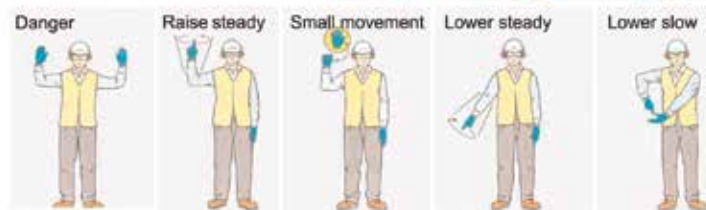


The tank, chimney and crane

## Hand signals for excavator lifts

The Off-highway Plant & Equipment Research Centre at the University of Birmingham has published a voluntary code of practice - 'Hand signals for when excavators are used as cranes'. The document aims to address the issue of poor communication between excavator operators and banksmen by providing a set of unequivocal - and in many cases long established - hand signals, to help train and educate operators and banksmen when using excavators as cranes to handle objects. It includes illustrations of 23 different recommended signals, ranging from the most simple and basic directions to the more complex.

The document which is free of charge, with copyright free charts and photographs, also acknowledges that excavators are fairly widely used to handle suspended loads, and takes the view that, given the fact it happens, it is best to provide advice on the signals to use as well as the need for proper lifting lugs and slings.



## £86k of fines and community service for scaffold tower fall

UK-based Turnkey Contractors and its subcontractor Cedar Ridge Construction have been fined £40,000 each plus costs of £3,184, while Turnkey director Santokh Dhanda has also received a 100 hour Community Service Order, after an employee was injured following a fall from a scaffold tower during the refurbishment of a pub in Reading in December 2016.

Samuel Goemans of Cedar Ridge suffered a serious head injury after falling from the tower onto the street below. His injuries have led to long term brain and memory problems along with seizures and the loss of the ability to care for himself. An investigation found that Turnkey failed to control the safety and planning on site and that Cedar Ridge carried out unsafe working practices.

## Eliminate Downtime campaign

Danish telematics supplier Trackunit and UK contractor BAM Nuttall have hosted the first Eliminate Downtime industry conference in London to highlight the costs of downtime and find solutions to increase productivity, safety and profitability. The Eliminate Downtime movement has the ultimate aim of completely eliminating downtime from the construction industry by 2025. Speakers from BAM Nuttall, Trackunit, Nationwide Platforms, P Flannery Plant and Plantforce Rentals covered highlighted their personal experiences and failings, while looking at solutions based on collaboration and open communication.

## £31k fine for ladder fall

UK contractor Clear Property Solutions has been £30,000 plus costs of £1,302.60 after a builder fell seven metres onto a concrete floor at one of its sites in Sheffield.

In April 2018 A self-employed builder, 34, had finished installing a flat roof on a dormer extension at the rear of a property. He climbed off the flat roof onto a scaffold using an unsecured folding ladder, the ladder slipped, and he fell onto the concrete floor below, sustaining two shattered heels and a fractured skull resulting in swelling and bleeding on the brain. An investigation found that the company had not completed any risk assessments, method statements or construction phase plan for the works. Men working on the site were also not trained on working safely at height.



The site of the accident

## Who trained him then?

A reader in South East Asia sent this photograph of three men trimming trees. In order to reach the higher limbs, they have placed a pallet on the forks of an industrial forklift, added an extension ladder cantilevered against the fork carriage. One of the two men has climbed the ladder, while the other foots it, and provides counterweight. Brains left on the ground!

