

TBT0006	Mobile Plant		
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Introduction
On many occasions it has been proved that the use of mobile plant can be lethal in untrained hands. Safe operation of mobile plant requires competence which is a combination of knowledge, training and experience.
Main Points
Isolation and Lock off - Vehicles/Mobile Plant Over the last five years in the UK there have been, on average, nearly 50 deaths and 6,000 serious injuries each year caused by vehicles in the workplace across all industries - according to HSE statistics. Most of these accidents are caused by people being struck by a moving vehicle or falling from a vehicle. Over 100 serious accidents are caused by vehicles running away after being parked or left unattended. Below are some incidents that occurred recently that highlight the need to work safely with and around vehicles: <u>Operator dismissed</u> <i>Whilst loading material into an aggregate receiving hopper the driver of a loading shovel left his vehicle unattended at the top of a steep access ramp. He left the keys in the ignition switch with the engine still running and a fully loaded bucket in an elevated position.</i> <i>After the driver had been away from his machine for a few minutes it started to roll backwards down the ramp, travelling approximately 35 metres before it collided with a bank and rolled over onto its side. After the vehicle was righted the handbrake was tested and found to be in full working order.</i>  <u>Driver Fell from Height</u> <i>A mixer truck driver was climbing the access ladder on the rear of his vehicle to check for build up. Whilst climbing the ladder the truck unexpectedly pulled forward and the driver was thrown from the access ladder of the truck, landing on his side in the yard.</i> <i>Due to a breakdown of the wharf crane at the concrete plant materials were being brought in by road, resulting in the yard becoming congested with vehicles. In order to allow a tipper lorry to leave the site another person had gone to move the truckmixer. The keys had been left in the ignition and the person moving the truck was unaware that the driver was on the rear of the vehicle. After moving the vehicle the truckmixer driver was found lying on the ground where he had fallen, an ambulance was called and the injured person was taken to hospital.</i>  <u>Driver sustained Life threatening Injuries</u>

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Whilst he was attempting to clean the drum discharge area of his truck, the driver of a hired in truck mixer appears to have leant into the revolving drum of his vehicle. It is unclear whether he had dropped the tool he was using or had leaned into the drum for another reason.

It would appear that the driver may also have been standing on the discharge chute rather than the platform at the rear of the vehicle. On leaning into the revolving drum the driver's head became caught between the drum feed chute and the drum blade.

The driver sustained major injuries to his neck and head and was also thrown from the vehicle sustaining further severe injuries in his fall. He was subsequently off work for several months and had to survive on liquids for some time.

Discussion Points

- Certain items of plant such as dumpers and forklift trucks are particularly prone to overturning if used unsafely.
- Ground work activities account for the greatest number of accidents involving mobile plant.
- Many accidents are caused by plant being used unsafely by untrained, unauthorised operatives.
- Many people are injured or killed by mobile plant that is reversing without the assistance of a signaller.
- The very nature of some mobile plant means that the driver has only limited visibility from the driving position.
- **NEVER** be tempted to use mobile plant unless you have been properly trained and are authorised.
- Operators of mobile plant **MUST** carry out daily pre-use checks of their vehicles (including seat safety cut out switches & emergency stop buttons where fitted) and report any defects noticed.
- In most cases it will be necessary for a signaller to assist the driver during reversing.
- Ideally, sites will be planned so that the need to reverse is kept to a minimum; if so, do not reverse unnecessarily.
- Obey speed limits and one-way systems.
- When parked, ensure the parking brake is on and the wheels are chocked if necessary. Runaway plant causes accidents.
- If mobile plant is left unattended, ensure it is immobilised and in a safe state.
- Use stop-blocks where provided to avoid over-running.
- Mobile plant should only be refuelled at designated refuelling points by operatives who have been trained to do so.
- **DO NOT** carry passengers unless the plant is designed to do so and **ALWAYS** wear seat belts where fitted.
- If your safety is at risk from any item of mobile plant when you are doing your job, stop work and report it to your supervisor.
- Be aware of other hazards such as noise, you may need PPE such as ear muffs or plugs because of plant working near you.
- **NEVER** use in-ear music systems during working hours as they restrict awareness of your surroundings.
- Be aware of cyclists in the vicinity of your site, each year 120 cyclists are killed in the UK.

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- **REMEMBER** most serious incidents occur at junctions and when turning as this is when cyclists are most vulnerable, **ALWAYS** try to make eye contact if possible.

MOBILE PLANT IS THERE TO HELP YOU, DON'T LET IT HARM YOU!

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