

TBT0028	USE OF LIFTING EQUIPMENT		
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Introduction
Unsafe lifting practices result in numerous incidents every year, including serious and sometimes fatal accidents. Remember that lifting equipment now includes plant such as forklift trucks, telescopic handlers, MEWP's, hoists, gin wheels, etc., as well as cranes.
Main Points
• All lifting operations should be planned, and be supervised where applicable. • Lifting equipment and accessories must only be used for the purpose for which they were designed (i.e. Buckets are not designed for lifting persons). • The crane operator MUST check that the route of travel is clear of operatives, other cranes, or obstructions before travel commences. • Lifting equipment and accessories must only be used by trained personnel or under strict supervision.
Discussion Points
• All lifting equipment must be examined by a Competent Person at periods no greater than 6 months. These examinations will be carried out during specified periods, normally July and December each year and each examination is signified by a specific colour coding (either GREEN, BLUE, RED or YELLOW) on each piece of lifting equipment (e.g. cable tie). • Each site, factory or depot will display a colour code plaque/ sticker in various prominent locations to alert users to the relevant colour code in use – this should be updated following the completion of all examinations. Colour code for period - operatives aware of colour • Whilst the inspection and colour coding period apply to site, factory, depot owned equipment, it must also be noted that if a site hires any equipment, then as the USER, they are responsible for ensuring that it received the statutory 6 monthly inspection. • Similarly, if subcontractors use lifting equipment, site management must ensure that the statutory inspections are carried out on their equipment and proof of certification is provided by the subcontractor prior to use. • All lifting equipment must be marked with safe working loads (SWL's) which must never be exceeded. • Beware of overhead obstructions such as overhead power lines. • Use banks men/slingers wherever applicable. • Ensure all loads are stable and secure. • Beware of weather conditions – especially wind conditions when using cranes. • Ensure load is lifted off the ground, free, and correctly slung before hoisting. • ALWAYS wear a safety helmet and hi-visibility vest. • NEVER stand under a suspended load, and control movement under any such loads (exclusion areas). • Use hand signals where applicable, using only approved code signals, ensuring they are clear and distinct. • Use cranes to lift and lower loads vertically – never drag loads. • If necessary attach tag lines to assist in stability.

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- Lifting gear should be visually inspected for any obvious damage prior to use.

The most common causes of hand injuries are:

- Carelessness
- Lack of awareness
- Riding on loads is strictly prohibited, as is riding in unauthorised positions on any lifting equipment.
- When using forklifts travel with the load in the lowest practicable position and don't raise it on the move.
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MURPHY'S LAW ONLY APPLIES WHEN YOU HAVE FAILED TO PLAN PROPERLY!

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