

## SAFETY ALERT

### WORKER CRUSHED TO DEATH BY EXCAVATOR

#### INTRODUCTION

On 18th November 2019, James Rourke (22), lost his life after being struck and run over by an excavator whilst employed by Material Movements Ltd. The 22-year-old Site Engineer had recently graduated from the University of Birmingham and joined the business just months before the accident.



An investigation undertaken by the HSE identified significant legislative failings, leading to the successful prosecution of his employer.

#### WHAT I NEED TO KNOW

According to HSE statistics, incidents involving moving vehicles and plant remain a significant cause of workplace fatalities. In the period 2022 to 2023, there were 20-fatalities in the UK attributed to workplace accidents involving moving vehicles and plant, notwithstanding the significant number that resulted in serious, life changing and moderate injuries. Each one of these "statistics" is a real person. Just like you, they went to work one day. The difference is that they didn't get the chance to come home, but it doesn't need to be this way. Work smart and be safe, no task is worth risking your life for.

#### WHAT I NEED TO DO

- Never approach moving vehicles or plant until the operator / driver has acknowledged your presence and taken appropriate action. Plant operators should isolate the machine.  
**Note:** Do **NOT** assume they have seen you – follow the thumbs up rule. 👍
- Always maintain line of site with the operator / driver. Do not walk into blind spots, if you can't see the operator / driver, chances are they can't see you.
- Always stick to walkways and crossing points, where provided, and raise any concerns where you feel these are inadequate.
- Operators / drivers should keep their vehicle / plant in good order; free from defects and all windows, mirrors and cameras kept clean and unobstructed.  
**Note:** Ensure mirrors are adjusted correctly to minimise blind spots.
- Moving plant should be segregated from people and where there is a risk of interface, a Banksman should be provided to reduce the risk. Banksman duties require formal training.
- Never stand directly behind a vehicle when it is reversing, even when acting as a Banksman.
- Clear, approved, unambiguous hand signals should be used.
- Never leave keys in unattended vehicles / plant.
- Embrace technological advancements, such as the HALO system and proximity alarms.
- Wear the correct PPE, as the last line of defence, it could be the thing that saves your life.

**Should you require additional information or guidance, please contact us:**

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