Proper Load Handling Meeting Kit

FALLING LOAD HAZARDS

When working with overhead cranes and forklifts, falling loads are one of the most common, and most dangerous, hazards. A falling load can result in severe injuries, fatalities and significant structural damage.

Falling loads could be the result of:

- **Operator incompetency**. Ensure employees are adequately trained so they are able to carry out their roles competently and safely.
- **Mechanical failure**. The risk of mechanical failure can be reduced if you ensure a competent person carries out routine inspections, maintenance and repairs at suitable intervals.
- **Two blocking**. Two blocking occurs when an uppermost hoist line component (i.e the load block, hook block, overhaul ball) touches the upper block, boom tip or similar component.

CRANE OVERLOAD HAZARDS

The majority of crane structural failures and upsets are the result of somebody overloading a crane.

You could overload a crane if you:

- Swing or suddenly drop loads.
- Drag loads.
- Hoist loads beyond cranes capacity.
- Side-load a boom.
- Use defective components.

FORKLIFT LOAD BASICS

How do you load a forklift truck?

- Do not exceed the recommended load limit of your lift truck. Each lift truck has a maximum load limit. The load limit is shown on the data plate of the lift truck.
- Use the proper lift fixture or attachment for special loads (such as carpet spike or drum grappler).
- Position the load according to the recommended load centre. The load limit of the lift truck decreases as the load centre is raised.
- Do not add extra weight to counterbalance an overload.
- Keep loads close to the front wheels to keep lift truck stable
- If the load is unbalanced (by it's characteristics), keep the heavier end closer to the front wheels. Tilt the mast back.

SAFETY TIPS IN LOAD HANDLING FOR WORKERS

1. Never Position Yourself Underneath the Load

- While the risks seem obvious, it's still quite common for workers to position themselves underneath a load when operating lifting equipment. It's incredibly important that you don't do this as if anything goes wrong, you'll be at serious risk of being struck by the load.
- It's vital that you always stay a safe distance away from the load you're moving. This will ensure that, if you do make a mistake, the equipment malfunctions, or you encounter any other problem, you'll be out of harm's way and will be able to deal with the situation safely.

2. Ensure Training Is Up to Date

- Employers and operators of lifting equipment should ensure that their training is always up to date. This means that

workers should be given extra training whenever they’re introduced to new equipment or feel like they could do with refreshing their knowledge. Being trained once at the beginning of their careers isn’t enough for operators. It’s an ongoing process. Having up to date knowledge is the only way staff will be able to work safely, effectively, and efficiently.

FINAL WORD

When using lifting equipment, it’s vital that you stay vigilant and take the necessary safety precautions. Accidents will be much more likely to happen otherwise. These incidents can cause injuries, costly damage, and fatalities.