

## Tool Box Talk

### Excavator Quick Hitch Devices

**Prepare** Location? Distractions? Talk aids?

**Reason** The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) states that 13% of excavator accidents are attributed to buckets becoming detached from quick hitches. Detached excavator buckets were responsible for the deaths of 4 construction workers in 2007

**Why** The number of workplace accidents related to the use of quick-hitches is on the increased. Many of these accidents have been serious and unfortunately, several deaths have resulted.

**Outline** This tool box talk will cover:

1. Adopting a safe approach to quick hitch activity
2. Statutory requirements
3. Do's and Don'ts

#### Specific Requirements

- All operators must only use attachments once they are trained in the correct connection methods relating to specific quick hitch makes and models
- The manufactures connection procedures must be followed at all times
- The manufacturer-specified retaining pin must be available on the machine;
- Operators should only use pins which have been designed for this specific use;
- The operator must visually check that the pin is in place on the hitch before starting the work and every time a different attachment is fitted;
- Operators must not use the machine unless they are satisfied that the quick hitch is secured in place. If the operator cannot see this from the cab of the machine due to poor weather then s/he must visually check from the ground;
- The operator must establish a safe zone, free from other workers when undertaking any detachment or attachment activities
- If the manufacture recommends a shake and rattle of the bucket as safety check, this activity must be undertaken within the safe zone with the bucket at a low level
- The operator must NEVER operate an unsafe quick hitch coupler.
- The operator must report any suspect or defective quick hitch couplers immediately to your supervisor.
- Site supervisors should check quick hitch attachment activities as part of the company site policy.

#### Statutory Requirements:

##### The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

- *Section 7(a) of the Act states that:*
- *"It shall be the duty of every employee while at work to take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself and of [any] other persons who may be affected by his acts or omissions..."*

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### DO'S

Only use quick hitch attachments for which you have been specifically trained

Establish a safe zone, free from other workers when undertaking any detachment or attachment activities

The manufacturer's connection procedures must be followed at all times

Ensure that only the manufacturer's-specified retaining pin is used on the machine;

Ensure that the retaining pin has been visually checked and is correctly in place on the quick hitch before starting the work and every time a different attachment is fitted

Report any suspect or defective quick hitch couplers immediately to your supervisor

### DON'TS

NEVER swing the bucket over the workers and NEVER let the workers under the bucket.

NEVER operate the Coupler without the supplemental safety device in place.

NEVER use retaining pins which have not been designed for this specific use

NEVER operate an unsafe Coupler. Report it immediately to your supervisor.

**Ask questions to confirm understanding**

**REMEMBER: IF YOUR BUCKET COMES OFF, IT COULD BE YOUR MATE STANDING IN THE WRONG PLACE**

**YOU, THE OPERATOR ARE THE BEST SAFETY DEVICE WE HAVE, SO BE PROFESSIONAL AT YOUR JOB.!**

**Do you have questions for me?**