

RIDDOR incident - plant immobilisation

16/04/2021: A 3 tonne 360° excavator was being used to spread/trim type1 sub-base on a footpath. The machine operator dismantled the machine to use a hand shovel but did not switch off the machine when he left the cab.

Whilst getting back into the machine his foot slipped off the rubber tracks and, in an attempt to save himself from falling, he tried to grab onto the cab. In doing this he knocked the hydraulic isolation lever (dead man's handle) to the **on** position and at the same time nudged the tracking control lever, causing the machine to move forward and track onto his right foot.



At this point his injuries were not too severe because he was wearing the correct safety boots. He then tried to track the machine back off his foot by reaching into the cab and pulling the tracking control lever. Unfortunately, he moved the lever in the wrong direction causing the machine to track further forward onto his leg. He managed to attract the attention of a General Foreman nearby who raised the alarm and called for an ambulance.

The IP was taken to A&E where he was diagnosed as having a fracture to his tibia and underwent surgery to plate and pin the fracture. He was discharged after three days with crutches and a Velcro support boot and will require physiotherapy to rehabilitate his leg. IP will be off work for several weeks.

Investigation findings:

- The IP had the correct qualifications to operate the machine and was wearing the correct PPE.
- He had undergone the site safety induction training which included rules about switching off plant and removing keys.
- He was working alone because the squad were at lunch.
- Despite the slip and fall he thought he could move the machine off his foot un-aided.

Lessons learned

- **Despite the provision of isolation / dead man levers all plant should be switched off and the key removed before dismantling.**
- **Nobody should work alone regardless of the circumstances.**
- **All plant operative inductions should highlight this incident to share learning.**

Possible further learning of plant development

- **Consider company standard for double isolation / immobiliser precautions such as seat sensors or seat belt switches**

SHEQ Alert date: 05/2021

Display until: 01/06/2021

Distribution:	Morgan Sindall	x	Supply Chain	x	Plant Hire Desk	x	Morgan Sindall Group	x
Communication:	Toolbox talks / briefings	x	Noticeboards	x	SHEQ update	x		

Everyone has the right to be

100% Safe