

Toolbox Talk Details

Title	D06 - Mobile elevating work platforms
Reason	Mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs) are used extensively to gain access on construction sites. When used responsibly and safely, a MEWP can significantly reduce the risk of injuries from falling from height. They are useful items of plant but can be dangerous if not used in a safe manner.
Outline	This talk covers the hazards and safe operating methods for MEWPs.

Hazards

1. Operatives falling from height because of unsafe work practices.
2. Overturning of the machine due to poor operating technique or unsatisfactory ground conditions.
3. Collision with other vehicles (knuckle or elbow of boom moving into the path of other traffic).
4. Entrapment of the operator between the basket and an adjacent structure.
5. Involuntary operation of the controls (leaning over the platform guard-rails or control panel).
6. Poor lighting levels.
7. Tools and materials falling from height.
8. Contact with live electrical cables and other high-level obstructions.
9. Prolonged exposure to diesel engine exhaust fumes, which can cause cancer.
10. High wind speeds and other adverse weather conditions.

Precautions

1. The use of MEWPs should take place in line with a documented safe system of work (lift plan). In addition, a rescue plan must be in place to enable the prompt recovery of injured workers.
2. All operators of MEWPs must be trained in their use.
3. The MEWP should be checked by the operator in line with the manufacturer's instructions, prior to each period of use.
4. Operators should only operate the types of MEWP for which they have been trained.
5. Always check that the machine is stable before use.
6. Generally, for all MEWPs, except scissor lifts, users should use a safety harness with a restraint lanyard clipped to the correct anchorage point on the machine. There should be no connection to an adjacent structure.
7. For scissor lifts, the need to use a safety harness or lanyard will depend upon the risk assessment.
8. Ensure ground conditions are suitable for the type of machine; voids and drain covers can collapse.
9. Do not load the machine beyond its rated capacity (safe working load (SWL)).
10. If your work involves removing equipment or materials from a structure, allow for the extra loading.

11. When manoeuvring in a confined area or where members of the public are at risk, always use a marshaller.
12. Be prepared to stop work and return to ground level if the wind speed or weather conditions deteriorate.
13. Anti-entrapment devices can prevent operatives from being crushed. They are not yet available in all MEWPs, but they should be specified and used whenever possible.
14. Ensure that a responsible person who is familiar with the emergency lowering system is always close to the MEWP to lower the work platform in case rescue is required.

Refuelling

1. Always turn the engine off before refuelling.
2. LPG-powered machines must be refuelled in designated areas where any spillage can be controlled.
3. It is good practice to refuel all machines in the open air and in designated areas.
4. Avoid skin contact if refuelling diesel-powered equipment and use spill kits to clean up any spillage to avoid environmental or slipping hazards.

Revision Date	Assessed By	Signature
January 2021	Michael Reddan	