Toolbox talk

Plant and vehicles

Keep people and machines apart

10 minutes | For: Everyone on site, plant operators, drivers and banksmen

Why it matters

Moving vehicles and plant can kill or seriously injure people. HSE identifies poor separation of pedestrians and vehicles as a major cause of construction transport accidents. Keep them apart.

Key points

1. Use the marked pedestrian routes. Keep out of plant working areas unless you're needed there.
2. Nearly a quarter of workplace transport deaths happen during reversing.
3. Only trained, authorised people can operate plant. Keys must be controlled.
4. Never walk behind or close to a reversing vehicle, or into a slewing excavator's swing area.
5. Keep out of the working area until the operator acknowledges you, stops and makes the plant safe. Eye contact alone is not permission to approach.
6. Banksmen must be trained, wear high-vis and stand where they can be seen and stay safe.
7. If the driver loses sight of the banksman, they must stop immediately.
8. Wear your seatbelt in plant fitted with one, and check the machine before each shift.

Scan for the latest version of this talk online ›

Go further: Plant hire and fuel cost calculator

Sources: HSE: Vehicles and traffic management in construction; HSE: Reversing vehicles; HSE: The safe use of vehicles on construction sites (HSG144).

This talk supports, but does not replace, your site-specific risk assessment, method statement, training and supervision. Free to copy and use. **tradefoxapp.com/toolbox-talks/plant-vehicles**

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Do

- Stick to pedestrian walkways and crossing points.
- Wear high-vis clothing at all times on site.
- Do daily pre-use checks on plant and report faults.
- Use agreed hand signals between banksman and driver.
- Park plant in the designated area with the bucket down and keys removed.

Don't

- Don't walk behind reversing vehicles or plant.
- Don't operate plant you're not trained and authorised to use.
- Don't use your phone while operating plant or walking near it.
- Don't carry passengers unless the machine has a proper seat for them.
- Don't stand under a raised load or bucket.

Ask the group

- Where are the pedestrian routes and crossing points on this site?
- Where are the blind spots on the plant we use?
- What signals do our banksmen and drivers use?
- Where should plant be parked at the end of the day?

If it goes wrong: If someone is struck or trapped, shout for the machine to stop, call 999 and get a first aider. Don't move the machine unless it's needed to free them safely. Keep everyone else back.

On this site

Nearest first aider _____

Emergency assembly point _____

Site-specific hazards and controls _____

_____

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Attendance register

Plant and vehicles

Site / project _____ Date and time _____

Presented by _____ Company _____

	Name (print)	Company	Signature
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			

By signing, attendees confirm they took part in this toolbox talk and understood the key points. Keep this record with your site safety file.

Presenter signature _____ Follow-up actions _____

Quick check

Plant and vehicles

Tick one answer for each question. Your presenter has the answers.

Name _____ Date _____

1. What causes most construction vehicle accidents?

- [ ] Bad weather
- [ ] People and vehicles not being kept apart
- [ ] Old vehicles

2. The driver loses sight of the banksman. What should happen?

- [ ] Carry on slowly
- [ ] Stop immediately
- [ ] Sound the horn and continue

3. Who can operate plant on site?

- [ ] Anyone with a driving licence
- [ ] Only trained, authorised people
- [ ] Anyone if it's quick

4. What should you do before walking near working plant?

- [ ] Get the operator to stop and acknowledge you
- [ ] Shout
- [ ] Nothing, they'll see you

5. How should plant be left at the end of the day?

- [ ] Anywhere, with keys in
- [ ] In the parking area, bucket down, keys removed
- [ ] Next to the excavation

Sources: HSE: Vehicles and traffic management in construction; HSE: Reversing vehicles; HSE: The safe use of vehicles on construction sites (HSG144).

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For the presenter

Answers and sources

Quick check answers

1. People and vehicles not being kept apart

HSE says most construction transport accidents result from poor separation of pedestrians and vehicles.

2. Stop immediately

HSE says the driver must stop straight away if the banksman disappears from view.

3. Only trained, authorised people

Plant must only be operated by people who are trained and authorised for that machine.

4. Get the operator to stop and acknowledge you

Stay outside the operating area until the operator has stopped and made it safe for you to approach.

5. In the parking area, bucket down, keys removed

Park in the designated area, lower attachments and remove keys so nobody can use it without authority.

Sources

- HSE: Vehicles and traffic management in construction
  https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/vehiclestrafficmanagement.htm
- HSE: Reversing vehicles
  https://www.hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport/information/reversing.htm
- HSE: The safe use of vehicles on construction sites (HSG144)
  https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg144.htm

> **Presenting tips:** keep it to about 10 minutes, use real examples from your site, ask the group questions rather than reading everything out, and record attendance on the register.

Can the driver see you?

1. **Use the walkways**
2. **Never walk behind reversing plant**
3. **Wait until the plant is made safe**

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Sources and qualifications

Plant and vehicles

Scope: Great Britain safety legislation unless a nation is identified. Northern Ireland has separate legislation. Site rules can be stricter than minimum legal duties; use the site assessment, instructions and competent supervision.

A4 applicability: no installation-design requirement is asserted in this talk. Its claims are referenced to the subject-specific sources below.

S1. HSE: Construction vehicles and traffic management

Pedestrian segregation, routes, competent operators, safe approach and parking; talk sheet, quiz and poster.

https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/vehiclestrafficmanagement.htm

S2. HSE: Reversing vehicles

Reversing risk, trained signallers, agreed signals and stopping when visual contact is lost; key points 2, 6-7.

https://www.hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport/information/reversing.htm

S3. HSE HSG144: Safe use of vehicles

Seat belts, pre-use checks, visibility, attachments, passengers and parking; Do/Don't and quiz.

https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg144.htm