



# Safety Alert

## MEWP Boom Failure

19<sup>th</sup> December 2018

The following pages of this safety alert were issued by Highways England's supply chain partner:

**Balfour Beatty**

# SAFETY ALERT

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## MEWP Boom Failure

### What Happened?

A JLG1850 boom type MEWP was working at high level (approximately 40m above the ground) when it failed to respond to the operating controls and then tipped to one side. The two operatives in the basket fell (within the basket) but were unharmed. A high level rescue was performed by an adjacent MEWP and the operatives were recovered to the ground safely and without further incident.

### What can we learn?

A thorough investigation is still on-going, with the components suspected of contributing to the incident being sent away for forensic examination. Whilst it is still too early to confirm the cause of the failure, one of the contributing factors is now known to be a check valve that was found to be stuck in the open position.



### Preventative actions to be taken

Based on what we know so far, please consider the following points when using MEWPs:

- Making sure that all operatives using boom type MEWPs are correctly wearing their harnesses and clipped on. The fact that both individuals were correctly clipped on in this incident may have saved their lives.
- Check that all MEWPs on arrival have been correctly serviced in line with manufacturers requirements and this specifically includes changing hydraulic fluids at correctly specified timescales
- Check that all MEWPs clearly show when the next service is due both in terms of a date and hours worked (whichever is the sooner). It is worth noting that some hire companies will only service their units when they are off-hired and returned to the depots. However, if you are using a unit for long period of time or for multiple shifts, then the time before the next service can be dramatically reduced
- Remind operatives that if they notice any abnormal movement when operating MEWPS, they should immediately return to ground level and report it.

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