

Reoccurring HiPo – Machinery Seat Belt Misuse

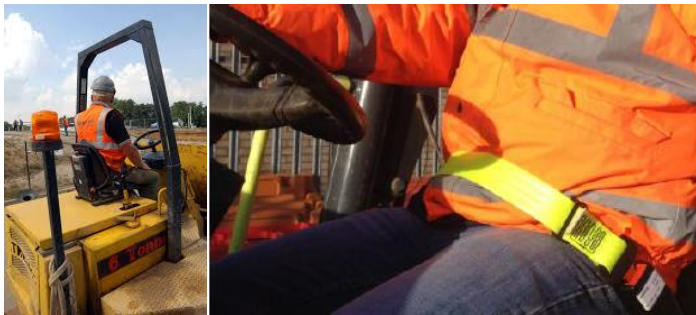
Description

A number of operatives have been observed to be driving machinery without wearing a seat belt during recent site safety inspections.

Passive warning devices had been intentionally bypassed with the operative buckling the belt and sitting on it.

There is a foreseeable risk of operatives suffering an injury as a result of a fall out of the seat. This has been identified as a reoccurring issue and is not acceptable.

There have also been several recent overturned machine incidents reported to Highways England, which highlight this risk and the importance for correct use of seatbelts.



Investigation

Research has identified a number of factors as to why seat belts are not always worn:

- Low levels of trust in the combined seat belt/roll over protection system (ROPS);
- Wearing the seat belt may be seen as being inconvenient and uncomfortable;
- The basic nature of the typical seat belt design may result in belts becoming dirty and damaged;
- Behavioural – Operatives may cut corners to save time ('just job') or are complacent as to the risks;
- Poor supervision – Poor behaviour is not always noted or challenged

Actions:

- Ensure risk assessments identify the risk of serious injury following the misuse of the seat belt and control measures are implemented
- Ensure mobile machinery is regularly inspected and visually examined prior to use
- Ensure supervisors regularly engage with the workforce and communicate the control measures and challenge if necessary
- Ensure Operatives do not take 'shortcuts' – seat belts can save lives
- Promote and show what good practice looks like.

For further information please contact NH&ST@highwaysengland.co.uk