



# Safety Alert

## Excavator bucket falling onto a live carriageway

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

**Costain**

# SAFETY LESSONS LEARNT

## Excavator bucket falling onto a live carriageway

### What Happened

An excavator was manoeuvred into position behind the low loader. Additional buckets supplied with the excavator were configured as shown in *figure 1*. The operator dismantled the excavator to allow the lorry driver to load the beaver tail. As the excavator drove up the ramps (holding the buckets in position) the driver stopped to lay the buckets down. During this activity, one of the buckets came loose and fell off the low loader. It alighted straddled between the layby and live carriageway causing an obstruction to the traffic using the road.



Figure 1: Bucket loading configuration



Figure 2: Beaver Tail style Lorry used to move excavator

### What did we learn?

To prevent a similar occurrence the following should be considered when carrying out plant loading operations:

- Ensure delivery driver inductions, including checks on CPCS or NPORS competencies for the unloading and loading of plant, are carried out.
- Provide enhanced levels of supervision and assurance to newly appointed subcontractors and suppliers, to ensure that workplace behaviours align to expectations.
- Ensure that Frontline Supervisors (FLS) have the technical knowledge and experience for the work they are supervising.
- Ensure RAMS are reviewed and understood by the Frontline Supervisors (FLS) responsible for the work.
- Carry out a Point of Work Risk Assessment (PoWRA) prior to any loading / unloading of plant, which considers the environment in which the activity is being undertaken.
- When planning loading / unloading operations ensure that consideration is given to the potential impact on the travelling public, controls developed must be accurately recorded in the RAMS and PoWRA for the work.

### Prompts for Contract Management Teams

- Review & share the lessons learnt above with your team and contract based supply chain.
- Assess the relevance of the lessons learnt and where necessary review and strengthen your contract management arrangement for loading & unloading of vehicles.

