

**Toolbox talks**

**Slingers/signallers**

**Background information:**

Slingers/signallers are appointed and authorised by site management as competent persons to direct the movement of loads many incidents occur due to untrained operatives assuming the role, this inevitably leads to confusion for crane operators resulting in loss of confidence in the operations. The safe use of cranes is controlled by safety procedures.

**Hazards:**

- Unauthorised slingers/signallers
- Inadequate knowledge of load details
- Environment
- Noise
- Proximity hazards structures, cables and excavations
- Access by unauthorised persons
- Public interfaces
- Lifting equipment damage.

**Health and safety points:**

- All lifting gear must have a statutory test certificate detailing its construction proof load, Safe Working Load (SWL), identification and date of issue. This is supported by visual inspections before each use and inspections by competent persons on a six monthly interval with colour code application
- Slings and other chains must not be shortened by tying knots in them or by wrapping them around the crane hook
- All lifting gear must be marked with SWL
- Chains are not to be jointed by means of bolts or wire
- Wire ropes are not sharply bent at any point
- Wire ropes are never used singly by a spliced eye. The cable is likely to untwist allowing the splices to open and slip
- All end links, rings or shackles ride freely upon any hook on which they are used
- Slingers/signallers must be readily identified by helmet and waistcoat in a distinctive colour
- Slings shall be protected from sharp edged loads by packing soft wood or other suitable material between load and sling – bricks are not suitable packing. Make sure the packing is secure
- Ensure the load is evenly distributed to avoid excessive stress on one side of the sling
- Avoid letting load rest on a wire rope or a strop; it may crush the strands and render the rope / strop unsafe
- Ensure load is securely slung before lifting
- Hook block safety catches must always be closed
- Always see that the crane hook is centrally placed over the load to prevent swinging when load is being raised, and that the load is balanced
- Take your hands away from the chains and ropes before the crane takes the load. Wear gloves
- Check the load is free for lifting, lift the load approx. 300mm and check stability
- Give warnings to persons to keep clear of load
- Signals must be given by the person responsible for the lift, and nobody else (unless in an emergency stop situation). Note: Signaller must be trained and capable of giving clear signals to the standard set in BS 7121
- Hooks and slings not in use should not be carried on the crane hook; they can cause the sling carrying the load to ride on the nose of the hook
- Never ride on a crane load, or allow any other person to do so
- Always keep load clear of people; never lift loads over people
- Chains, slings, hooks or loads should never be dragged along the ground
- Make sure there is a firm foundation for stored materials, and make provision for removal of slings without disturbing stack
- Always back hook chains/slings back to ring to prevent them fouling on scaffold etc.
- Ensure lay down areas are suitable to take the load and there is easy trip free access.

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## Management System

**Toolbox talks****Question time:**

- Q How often should lifting gear be inspected?
- Q What must be done with sharp corners on loads?
- Q Who can give an emergency stop signal?

**Have you got any questions?**

Record questions on the attendance sheet.

**Safety reminder:**

**Only one authorised person to control lifting at any time avoid confusion.**

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