

Immediate Release

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WHO NEEDS TO KNOW?

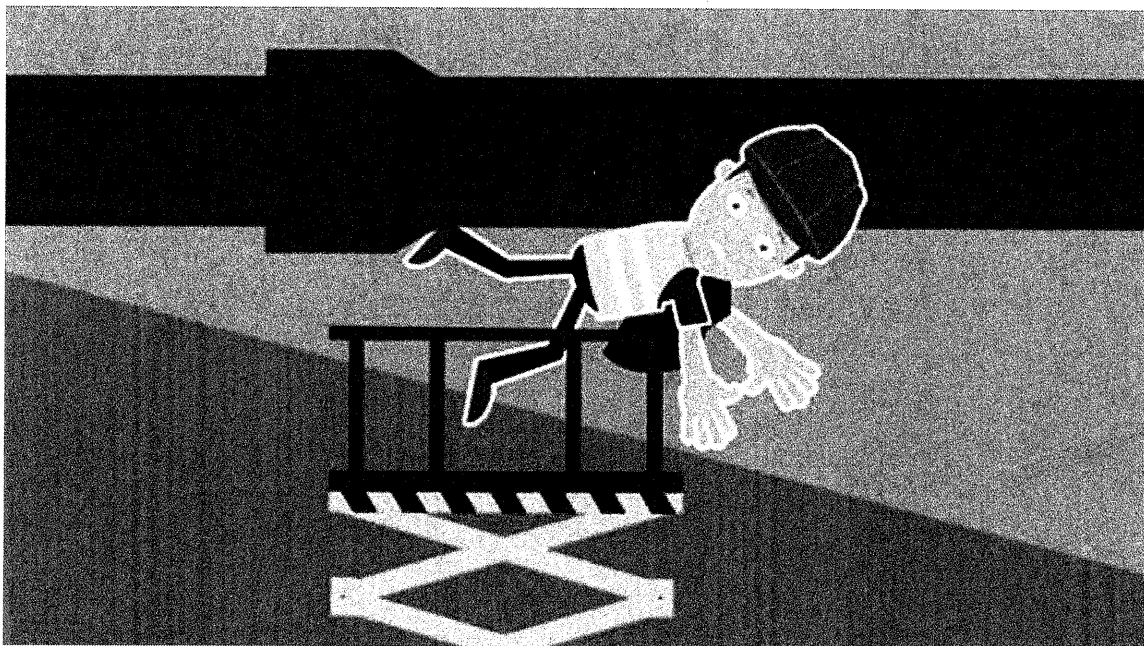
- User (who has control of MEWP usage);
- Site managers and supervisors (overseeing MEWP operations);
- MEWP operators.
- Nominated ground rescue person(s)

Industry Alert: Overhead Hazards While Using Mobile Elevating Work Platforms.

In response to the recent fatal accidents associated with overhead hazards during the operation of mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs), the International Powered Access Federation (IPAF) and IPAF Hong Kong Workgroup have collaborated to release this crucial industry alert. The primary goal is to raise awareness regarding the potential dangers of crushing and entrapment hazards when operating MEWPs and providing guidance to prevent such incidents.

What is entrapment?

Entrapment is a situation in which the operator or occupant of a MEWP becomes trapped or crushed between the MEWP controls or platform guardrails and an immovable object or external structure.



Cases:

- On January 15th, 2024, a worker in Kai Tak Hong Kong was reportedly crushed while operating a scissor lift. She was discovered unconscious on the platform.
- On January 10th, 2024, a worker in Shenzhen was reported to be fatally crushed while operating a MEWP.
- On January 29th, 2024, a worker in Shenzhen was reported to be fatally crushed while operating a MEWP.

The use of mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs) has increased due to their benefits in productivity and safety. MEWPs are acknowledged by many to be the safest and most efficient means of providing temporary access to height for many work activities. The increased use of MEWPs in construction, maintenance and other applications where trapping and crushing risks are present has led to unfortunate accidents in which people in the platform have been trapped and crushed between the platform (often referred to as a cage or basket) and objects/structures in the work area.

In some cases, these accidents have resulted in fatalities to the occupant(s) in the platform. Managers must take a lead in identifying when and where trapping risks are present in the work activities which they control. Where trapping risks are identified extra planning is needed and all involved must understand what they need to do to avoid or reduce the risks involved. Accidents can be avoided if good practice is encouraged and followed. The basis of preventing trapping accidents must be a task, site and equipment specific risk assessment. All involved in the management, supervision and operation of MEWPs need to understand how to minimise the risks of someone being trapped in the basket and the importance of having effective rescue procedures in place and practiced should such an entrapment occur.

Rescue of persons at height from crushing/trapping must be considered and a rescue plan formulated and communicated to all persons. Rescue plans should be practiced so that all persons involved know what to do in the event of a trapping, crushing incident.

A) 8 KEYWAYS TO MINIMIZE ENTRAPMENT HAZARDS WITH MEWPs

1. Planning
2. Risk Assessment
3. Safe System of Work
4. Training and Competence
5. MEWP Selection
6. Emergency and Rescue Plan
7. Co-ordination with other activities and preparation of work areas
8. Selection of secondary guarding devices to MEWPs

Click here to receive details on these 8 factors: <https://www.ipaf.org/en/campaigns>

B) RAISE THE AWARENESS WITH ANDY ACCESS POSTER

Contractors, Users and rental companies are urged to download this free poster artwork, for use in their daily operations, as part of IPAF's Andy Access campaign promoting the safe use of MEWPs.

<https://www.ipaf.org/en-us/resource-library/andy-access-overhead-obstructions>

C) PREVENT OVERHEAD ENTRAPMENT WITH IPAF TOOLBOX TALK

Toolbox talks are short discussion sessions that allow you and your workers to explore the risks and safety issues specific to your work site. The talks should focus on a single topic. A toolbox talk should be a regular occurrence to reinforce learning and gain worker buy-in.

<https://www.ipaf.org/en-us/resource-library/avoid-overhead-obstructions-toolbox-talk>

D) PROPER SITE ASSESSMENT AND SELECTING THE CORRECT MEWPs

Based on statistics, IPAF analysis often finds that the underlying causes can be traced back to poor planning, inadequate risk assessment, and incomplete understanding of the technical and safety demands of the task or attempting the job using an unsuitable machine or untrained operators and supervisors.

Selecting a MEWP can be complex and challenging, even for experienced site managers. Being confident and sufficiently knowledgeable to select the correct MEWP for the job directly reduces risk.

<https://www.ipaf.org/en-us/training-courses/site-assessment-mewp-selection>

E) ENSURE MEWP OPERATORS ARE ADEQUATELY TRAINED

The IPAF operator course instructs a candidate to prepare and safely operate various types of MEWPs. IPAF's MEWP Operator Training is internationally recognised and certified by TÜV as conforming to the international standard ISO 18878 and GB/T 27549-2011, Mobile elevating work platforms – Operator (driver) training.

<https://www.ipaf.org/en-us/training-courses/mewp-operator-training>

F) PROPER FAMILIARISATION WITH A COMPETENT DEMONSTRATOR

This course trains a demonstrator to familiarise operators with their responsibilities and to demonstrate pre-operational and safe operating procedures, and the limitations of MEWPs.

<https://www.ipaf.org/en-us/training-courses/mewp-demonstrator>

G) ENSURE SELECTED MEWP OPERATORS ARE TRAINED WITH HIGHER PROFICIENCY

This advance operator course PAL+ is important for operators who are working in higher risk, challenging environments, operating super boom lifts or bigger deck scissor lifts that have more sophisticated, complex controls. Completion of this course means that the operator has successfully completed additional, practical training and testing to an advanced level. The operator has successfully demonstrated his/her ability to operate powered access equipment safely and effectively in challenging work environments.

<https://www.ipaf.org/en-us/pal-plus>

H) ENSURE COMPETENCY OF SUPERVISORS / MANAGERS

Standards like BS8460:2017, ANSI A96.22:2020 and ACOP SS616:2016, specify that personnel who manage or supervise the use of MEWPs shall be trained and competent.

This IPAF MEWPs for Manager course is engaging, challenging and rewarding and is a must for all persons who plan, supervise, manage or control the use of MEWPs in the workplace. It now utilizes interactive 360-degree graphics and virtual scenarios that contextualize specific hazards and requires candidates to put various pieces of risk assessment and technical and safety guidance together to identify and control identified risks.

The eLearning version of the IPAF MEWPs for Managers course enables candidates to undertake the course at their convenience and pass the online course at a time and place of their choice, on compatible PCs and tablet devices. It uses sophisticated facial recognition across the online training and evaluation session to ensure the candidate's identity and to prevent any attempt to obtain the qualification through fraudulent means.

<https://www.ipaf.org/en-us/training-courses/mewps-managers>

I) ESTABLISH A SAFE USE ECOSYSTEM

Many people think that just sending operators to a basic course, doing a risk assessment, and having someone oversee the job is enough to use MEWPs safely. But using MEWPs safely involves several connected elements. Users need to know and have these elements in place before using MEWPs.

The IPAF Ecosystem for the Safe Use of MEWPs is introduced to guide users. It helps them check if they have set up these important elements in their system before using MEWPs at their workplace. The Ecosystem includes 18 essential elements (and more) to ensure the safe use of MEWPs in workplaces.

<https://www.ipaf-wopa.com/safety-resources.php>

J) RENT FROM A 3RD PARTY CERTIFIED RELIABLE RENTAL COMPANY

Contractors have the ultimate responsibility for the sites they manage, including employees, sub-contractors, and operators. MEWPs are commonly used on construction sites and in facilities management by various suppliers. However, many regions lack recognized standards for rental companies offering these machines. Without industry standards, suppliers develop their own systems to comply with legal requirements and safety measures.

Problems may arise when these systems prove inadequate, even with rigorous pre-qualification policies. While many rental companies are certified to standards like ISO 9001, it doesn't guarantee adherence to industry-specific good practices for MEWPs. As the global powered access industry grows, more manufacturers enter the market, and second-hand machine use increases. The responsibility for compliance with country/regional standards falls on rental companies, including maintaining machines and following manufacturer schedules.

Operators, responsible for daily pre-use checks, rely on the integrity of rental companies regarding maintenance schedules. Without conducting their audits, contractors trust the entire supply chain to ensure operator safety. IPAF has launched the IPAF Rental+ certification scheme to more regions, involving an annual audit with industry-specific questions to ensure adherence to the Rental Standard.

BENEFITS:

TO CONTRACTORS

Main contractors play a significant role in promoting industry safety standards and good practice. By requiring suppliers of powered access machines and equipment to hold the IPAF Rental+ certification, therefore demonstrating adherence to the IPAF Rental Standard, contractors ensure the following benefits without any incurred cost:

- Third party, independent audit by an internationally respected not-for-profit organisation in their powered access supply chain.
- Evidence of improved due diligence.
- Knowledge that all suppliers meet or exceed minimum country/region legal requirements.
- Reassurance that they are not relying solely on the integrity of sub-contractors to complete prequalification checks of powered access suppliers.
- Cost saving potential on existing procurement procedures.
- Guarantee that only trained rental company personnel deliver, operate, and maintain machines and equipment on sites.
- Reduced lost working time due to machine or equipment failure, or operator error.
- Checks to ensure suppliers are adhering to environmental obligations.
- Improved safety, leading to fewer accidents and a better health and safety record, hence increasing the likelihood of securing future contracts.
- Improved company reputation within the industry.
- Savings on incident investigation.
- Better relationships with enforcement agencies.
- Reduced likelihood of prosecution.

<https://www.ipaf.org/en-us/ipaf-rental-standard>

K. Secondary Guarding for MEWPs

Secondary guarding is not a mandatory requirement for the safe use of a MEWP, but Users are required to take all reasonably practical steps to reduce the identified entrapment risks to as low as possible, so where entrapment hazards still exist, those responsible for selecting the work equipment will need to have demonstrated that they have considered the potential benefits secondary guarding might offer and justify their selection decision.

<https://www.ipaf.org/en/resource-library/good-practice-guidance-reducing-trappingcrushing-injuries-people-mewps?region=176>

About IPAF – www.ipaf.org

The International Powered Access Federation (IPAF) promotes the safe and effective use of powered access equipment worldwide in the widest sense – through providing technical advice and information; through influencing and interpreting legislation and standards; and through safety initiatives and training programmes.