



MEWPS BEING HIT BY OTHER EQUIPMENT WHILE ELEVATED TOOLBOX TALK

Mobile Elevating Work Platforms (MEWPs) are at risk of being struck by falling objects, or collision with other machinery/equipment while in the elevated position.

Incidents of this nature have the potential to cause fatalities and major injuries to platform occupants. If a MEWP is hit or struck this can lead to ejection, potentially leading to a fall from height for the platform occupants.

This Toolbox Talk provides information on the types of hazards that can cause collisions/impacts and suggests ways to reduce the likelihood of these incidents occurring.

WHAT ARE THE HAZARDS?

Data from IPAF's accident reporting portal informs us that MEWPs have been struck by:

- Overhead gantry cranes
- Loads being carried by cranes
- Structural collapses of buildings striking the MEWP
- Other MEWPs or equipment working in the same area
- Falling objects, such as tree branches and steel work
- Passing vehicles contacting the MEWP
- Loose materials falling from above the MEWP

WHAT SHOULD BE IN PLACE BEFORE STARTING WORK?

Planning is critical for the safe operation of any MEWP activity. The planning stage should consider:

- A site-specific risk assessment
- The development of a Safe System of Work (SSoW) and safe work procedures
- Trained and familiarised MEWP operators
- The correct MEWP selection
- A permit to work (if necessary)
- A designated and documented rescue plan
- Electrical/mechanical isolation of other equipment/cranes etc.
- An ongoing site assessment/review of the site conditions
- An adequately sized exclusion zone at the base of the MEWP
- Appropriate supervision by competent persons
- Personal Fall Protection Equipment (PFPE) and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for MEWP operators and platform occupants

USEFUL REFERENCES

- IPAF Operators Safety Guide (available via the ePAL app www.ipaf.org/ePAL)
- Manufacturer Operators Manual (available via www.ipaf.org/manufacturers)
- IPAF Safe use of MEWPs to Manage Trees and Vegetation (available via www.ipaf.org/resources)
- IPAF Safe Use of MEWPs in Public Areas (available via www.ipaf.org/resources)

WHO NEEDS TO KNOW?

This Toolbox Talk applies to all individuals involved with the safe operation of a MEWP, including:

- MEWP operators
- Managers and supervisors
- Nominated ground control rescue persons
- Workshop and engineering staff

WHAT SHOULD THE MEWP OPERATOR DO?

- Perform a pre-use inspection: Always inspect the MEWP before use. IPAF recommends keeping a record of the inspection in your IPAF ePAL app or logbook
- Report defects: Do not use the MEWP if any defects or damage are found
- Implement control measures:
 - Check electrical/mechanical isolation of other equipment such as overhead cranes are in place
 - Display warning signs
 - Establish an adequate exclusion zone to prevent contact with vehicles or equipment
 - Ensure a nominated ground control rescue person is present and has been familiarised with the ground controls and the emergency lowering procedures
- Maintain a reliable communication method with the nominated ground control rescue person
- Wear appropriate PFPE and PPE: Use the correct Personal Fall Protection Equipment (PFPE) and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Be vigilant: If other equipment enters your exclusion zone, sound the horn, lower the platform, and inform your supervisor
- Tree work precautions: Arborists should ensure that cuts made above the work platform won't allow objects to contact with the MEWP
- Stay within the exclusion zone: Never position any part of the MEWP outside this area
- Respond to impacts: If the MEWP has been struck by a falling object, lower the platform, isolate and tag the MEWP and report the issue. Do not use it until inspected by a competent person

REMEMBER!

- Always be aware of your surroundings
- Don't take short cuts, that's when accidents happen
- Report any unsafe acts or conditions