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# Lifting Operations & Equipment Policy and Guidance

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Every year the use of work equipment including lifting equipment results in a number of accidents, many of which are serious, and sometimes can be fatal. The guidance below has been prepared to ensure that lifting equipment provided, controlled, used, supervised or managed at work is safe. This should be used in conjunction with the guidance issued for Work Equipment.

### **Strength and Stability**

Lifting equipment including attachments used in the lifting operation must be of adequate strength and stability for each individual load raised or lowered and particular attention must be paid to the stresses incurred at the mounting points.

### **Lifting Equipment for Lifting Persons**

Lifting equipment for lifting persons and the work activities being carried out by the carrier must prevent anyone from being crushed, trapped or stuck, or from falling from the carrier.

There must also be suitable devices to prevent the risk of a carrier from falling. If this risk cannot be prevented the carrier must have an enhanced safety co-efficient suspension rope or chain which must be inspected daily.

People trapped inside a carrier must be protected from danger and be able to be freed.

### **Positioning and Installation**

Lifting equipment must be positioned and installed to be safe and minimise risks of the equipment or its load striking a person, or its load drifting, falling freely or being unintentionally released.

Suitable devices must be provided to prevent people from falling down lift shafts or hoistways.

### **Marking of Lifting Equipment**

Lifting equipment must be clearly marked with its safe working loads. Accessories must be marked with any information necessary to ensure their safe use. Lifting equipment for lifting people must be clearly marked as such.

### **Organisation of Lifting Operations**

Lifting operations involving lifting equipment must be properly planned by a competent person appropriately supervised and carried out in a safe way.

### **Thorough Examination and Inspection**

Lifting equipment must be thoroughly examined to ensure correct installation and safe operation and for defects after it has been installed and before being put into service for the first time, or after it has been relocated.

Where lifting equipment is exposed to conditions that may cause deterioration it must be thoroughly examined as follows:

- Lifting equipment for lifting people: at least every 6 months
- Other lifting equipment: at least every 12 months.

A competent person must draw up the examination scheme, which will determine the frequency of the thorough examinations.

A thorough examination will also be required following exceptional circumstances that may have adversely affected the safety of the lifting equipment, for example extreme weather conditions.

### **Reports and Defects**

The person undertaking the thorough examination must notify the employer immediately of any defects that are, or could be, a danger to people and submit a written and signed report to the employer and if appropriate the person hiring or leasing the lifting equipment. The HSE must also receive a copy of any report where there is an existing or imminent risk of serious personal injury due to a defect in the lifting equipment.

The information required to be included in a thorough examination report is as follows:

1. Name and address of employer.
2. Address of premises at which the thorough examination was made.
3. Lifting equipment identity marks, including date of manufacture if known.
4. Date of last thorough examination.
5. Safe working loads, including those associated with equipment configurations.
6. Where the thorough examination relates to the installation or assembly of the lifting equipment, notification of that fact and that it has been installed correctly and is safe to operate.
7. Information as to whether the thorough examination relates to a 6 or 12 monthly examination carried out under an examination scheme, or an examination carried out of exceptional circumstances where the safety of the lifting equipment may have been jeopardised. The report should also state that the lifting equipment is safe to operate.
8. Details and identification of any parts found to be defective, including a description of the defect, where the defect is or could become a danger to people.
9. Details of any necessary repairs, renewals or alterations to correct a defect.
10. In cases where the defect may represent a danger to people the following must be included:
  - the time in which the defect could become a danger;
  - details of repairs, renewals or alterations necessary to correct the defect;
  - the latest day on which the next thorough examination must be carried out;
  - details of any tests if these are included in the thorough examination;
  - the date.
11. Name, address, qualifications and employment status of the person making the report - if the person is an employee then the name and address of his or her employer must be included.
12. Name and address of the person signing or authenticating the report.
13. Report date.

Defects noted during an inspection which pose a danger to people must also be notified to the employer immediately and a written record of the inspection made. Lifting equipment, which has been notified as having a defect, may not be used until the defect has been corrected.

### **Keeping of Information**

For equipment obtained after 5 December 1998 EC declarations of conformity must be kept for as long as the equipment is being operated.

All thorough examination reports must be kept for as long as the equipment is being used except for lifting accessories reports and reports carried out due to deterioration in condition, which must be kept for 2 years.