

SAFETY ALERT



Loading and Unloading of Materials Safety Alert

Document No: PS-HSQE-SA-76

Revision:1.0

Approved By: Hilary O'Brien

1. What Happened?

In 2023 to date, there have been 4 incidents during offloading of deliveries by UÉ contractors which have resulted in various outcomes including a near miss, a serious injury and unfortunately a fatality. All incidents have been investigated, with some currently ongoing. In due course we will be able to share key learnings and further actions through additional Safety Alerts.

Unloading deliveries can be a very hazardous activity if controls are not fully implemented. It is important to constantly raise awareness of the dangers of dealing with deliveries with your colleagues; in particular, those delivery drivers, hauliers, operatives and contractors that may be involved in the unloading of deliveries. Below are some high-level details of the incidents that occurred:

Incident 1 – A delivery driver had a fatal accident during the unloading of a pipe from a vehicle on a contractor site in Co. Kerry on 16th January 2023.

Incident 2 – During delivery of materials at a site, a HIAB crane was being used to remove two pallets from the truck. The removal of the pallets resulted in pipes rolling off the side of the truck causing damage to them and to a coupling.

Incident 3 – During the unloading of a surge vessel from a delivery lorry, the spider crane hook suffered a mechanical failure during the lifting process. This resulted in the release of one of the lifting chains, when the vessel was approx. 1m from its landing position. The release of the chain damaged some adjacent handrailing.

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Incident 4 – Whilst a courier delivery driver was unloading an electrical panel, the load became unstable and fell from the tailgate of the truck trapping his lower right leg against a pallet which resulted in the courier delivery driver sustaining a broken ankle.

2. Immediate Actions

Only persons in charge (PIC) of the site/ Project Supervisor for Construction Stage (PSCS) or in operational control of the workplace with responsibility for the work activity must co-ordinate offloading. A Lift plan must be prepared, risk assessments, safe systems of work and control measures must be in place when involved in both loading and unloading of deliveries. The PIC/PSCS must ensure these controls can include but are not limited to:

Lifting Operations

- **All drivers must be inducted and accompanied on site at all times.**
- Lifting operations must be planned and executed by competent personnel with the practical and theoretical knowledge and experience of carrying out lifting operations. Use of teleporters, excavators as cranes, HIAB, cranes used as lifting devices and any other lifting equipment will be completed by trained and competent persons.
- For crane use training requirements for Appointed persons, Crane Supervisors, Crane operators and slinger/signallers for lifting operations, these are outlined in the NSAI standards I.S 360:2019 Code of practice: Safe use of Cranes, Annex A and B and must be adhered to.
- A lift plan should be developed by a competent person for all lifts from basic lifts i.e., where the load characteristics are considered straightforward and there are no significant hazards, to more complex lifts i.e. where significant hazards have been identified. This plan should be reviewed continuously to ensure it

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remains valid. The plan should include, but not limited to:

- Site Conditions
 - Weather conditions
 - Margin of safety
 - Size and Type of lifting equipment
 - Type of lifting attachments required, e.g., chains, slings.
 - SWL of all lifting equipment (should never be exceeded)
 - Load weight, dimensions, swing radius
 - Methodology of the lift
 - Risk assessment
 - Thorough examination certificates of lifting equipment
 - Training
 - Inspections of equipment
 - Details of personal involved in lift, including names, roles etc
- The lift plan must be communicated effectively to all parties concerned and signed in acknowledgement that it is understood.
 - An exclusion zone should be set up, clear of other traffic, pedestrians and people not involved in loading or unloading.
 - The exclusion zone should also be clear of overhead electric cables so there is no chance touching them, or of electricity jumping to 'earth' through machinery, loads or people.
 - To maintain stability, trailers should be parked on firm level ground.
 - Ensure that all lifting equipment provided for use, on Uisce Éireann Projects, complies with EU require, for example CE marking, declaration of conformity. Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 – Use of Work equipment Chapter 2- Use of Work Equipment
 - All lifting operations are adequately planned, assessed, appropriately supervised by competent personnel, and carried out to protect the safety of

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employees.

3. Further Actions

Please keep vigilant for upcoming Safety Alerts in relation to the incidents mentioned for specific learnings and further actions. Please ensure that this Safety Alert is brought to the attention of all staff who conduct these activities.

4. Further Information

Please refer any queries to hsqe@water.ie or directly to your Uisce Éireann H&S support team. If the above links do not work and you require access to any of the above alerts – again contact hsqe@water.ie for a PDF version of these.

References

[HSQE-PR-029 Minimum Health, Safety, Quality and Environment Requirements for Irish Water Capital Projects](#)

[I.S. 360:2019 Code of Practice: Safe use of Crane in the Construction industry](#)

[UE-HSQE-SA-64 Transportation, loading and unloading activities](#)

[HSQE-SA-55 Site Deliveries Safety Alert](#)

[HSQE-SA-19 Crush injuries during crane lift](#)

[360 Excavators used as crane Pre-start Checks Sheet](#)

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