

Plant & Machinery Safety

Maintaining Safe Distance from Mobile Plant

Information Sheet

Why is this important?

Mobile plant such as excavators, dumpers and loaders can create serious risks to workers on site. Many incidents occur when people enter the operating area of machinery or when operators cannot see pedestrians.

Key Hazards

- Moving plant and vehicles
- Blind spots around machinery
- Reversing operations
- Pedestrian-plant interfaces
- Inadequate segregation

Safe Working Practices

- ✓ Plan plant movements before starting work
- ✓ Use barriers and exclusion zones where required
- ✓ Ensure banksmen/signallers are trained and clearly identified
- ✓ Complete pre-use inspections before operating plant
- ✓ Stop work if you feel unsafe



Safety Message:

“If you cannot see the operator, the operator may not see you. Keep clear of moving plant.”

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Remember: Stay Out of the Danger Zone

- Always stay outside the plant operating zone
- Never walk behind or approach machinery unless the operator has confirmed it is safe
- Use designated pedestrian routes
- Maintain eye contact with the operator before approaching
- Never assume the operator can see you

Plant Operator Responsibilities

- Check surroundings before moving
- Use mirrors, cameras and alarms
- Stop the machine if visibility is restricted
- Communicate clearly with site personnel

Supervisor Checks

- Are pedestrian and plant routes separated?
- Are exclusion zones clearly marked?
- Are operators competent and authorised?
- Are workers aware of site traffic rules?

Discussion Points

1. Where are the plant–pedestrian interface zones on our site?
2. What controls are in place to prevent people entering these areas?
3. What behaviours put workers at risk around mobile plant?

Reference: Guide to the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 Chapter 2 of Part 2: Use of Work Equipment https://www.hsa.ie/media/scpcdqdi/work_equipment_.pdf