

**ESSENTIAL  
STANDARD  
no.6**

# Mobile Plant

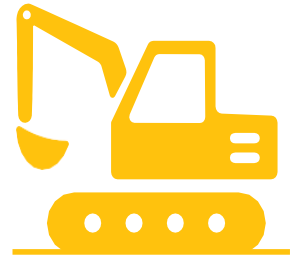


## KEY MESSAGES

- Select the appropriate plant for the working environment.
- Regularly inspect and maintain all mobile plant.
- Plant operators must be competent.
- Understand the different working zones from a safe distance.
- Always approach the working zones with extreme caution and get the plant operator's attention.
- Be aware of changing environments, stop and reassess the risks.
- Ensure pedestrian footpaths and walkways are clearly identified with appropriate signage.

## 1. Introduction

Mobile plant is one of the most dangerous hazards on our sites. Fatalities and serious injuries around mobile plant are usually caused by being hit by or thrown from them and also being crushed by loads falling from plant. These guidelines provide practical safety precautions that can reduce the number of serious incidents.



## 2. Selection of plant

Consider the following when deciding on what plant to use:



- **Ground conditions:** uneven surfaces, extent of slopes, soft/muddy ground, use on public highways.



- **Visibility of the driver,** Especially when reversing



- Hazards that the driver will be exposed to and the **effects of nearby operations**



- **Driver protection** from weather, dust, noise, etc.



- **Safe access** to and from the vehicle



- Access to and **guarding arrangements** of vehicle parts for maintenance



- **Specification:** headlights, safety features (seat belts, roll over protection, audible and visual warning, mirrors to allow all-round visibility, CCTV and proximity sensors).  
All vehicles/plant operating on slopes/banks must be fitted with roll over protection and seat belt as a minimum.

### 3. Inspection and Maintenance

Maintain all mobile plant in a condition so it can be used safely and without risks to health. To support this, have an inspection regime that includes:

- Daily checks by driver on water, oil, fuel, lights, tyres and brakes and hydraulic hoses
- Fixed guard must be checked and confirmed as being securely in place
- Regular, more thorough inspections carried out by a competent person
- Servicing according to manufacturer's instructions (based on hours or mileage)



Planned inspections/maintenance must follow manufacturer's recommendations and include checking:



- **Lights and indicators**



- **Brakes** (including the handbrake)



- **Tyres** (including condition and pressures)



- **Steering**



- **Mirrors, CCTV** and other visibility aids



- **Safety devices** such as interlocks, warning signals (alarms and beacons) and functional checks including controls and starting systems.

Defects must be reported immediately with the vehicle taken out of service to prevent its use, with records of inspection, maintenance and repairs being maintained.

Check mobile plant used for lifting; e.g. mobile cranes, telehandler, excavators; are thoroughly examined by a competent person at least every 12 months. Keep, and have available, certificates of examination on site. Perform thorough examinations on plant used for lifting persons at least every 6 months.



## 4. Training and competence

Drivers must be trained in how to use specific plant through a recognised scheme, e.g. CPCS, and ensure they are aware of the correct use of the vehicle, its limitations and hazards if not used properly.

Provide training for vehicle marshallers / banksmen so they are confident in directing pedestrians and vehicles.

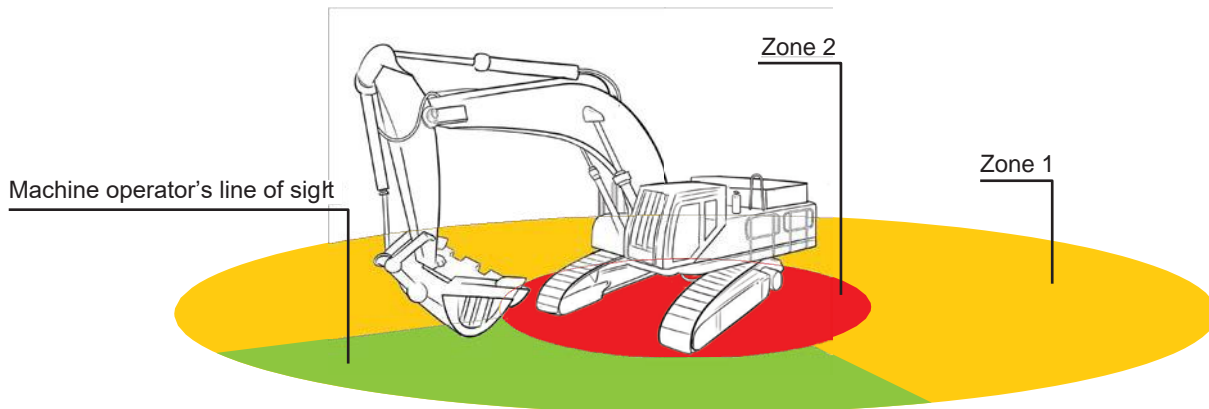


Make drivers aware of the following:

- Only operate vehicles if you are competent and authorized.
- Ensure that a familiarization briefing is given by the hiring company before use of any hired mobile plant.
- Ensure that the correct method of mounting and dismounting mobile plant is used to avoid falls from height.
- Ensure a seatbelt is worn where fitted, when using mobile plant on Thames Water sites, including when maneuvering
- Do not drive if your ability is impaired by ill health, poor vision or prescribed medication.
- Have complete understanding of the operating procedures of your vehicle
- Know the safe operating limits of your vehicle, especially safe working loads (SWL)
- Know the vehicle height to ensure safe clearance can be maintained when moving beneath structures.
- Carry out daily checks and report all defects to your supervisor
- Follow all site rules and procedures (One way systems, site speed limits, prohibited areas and safe parking)
- Make use of a banksmen or visibility aids if your (driver) visibility is impaired /obstructed. Stop if you lose sight of the banksman or the visibility aid becomes defective.

## 5. Working Zones

Where people are at most risk behind the vehicle or in the swing radius of the excavator, the activity must be subject to a risk assessment with identified control measures put in place to ensure the task is conducted safely.



The 'thumbs-up' is a universal symbol that something is OK. It crosses all languages and can be understood over the loudest of noises – that's why fighter pilots use it before they take off, and that's exactly why we want to adopt it in our world. Only give your thumbs-up to ask if it's safe or tell someone it's safe. It's all about call and response - put your thumbs up to ask, and wait for the thumbs-up before you move.

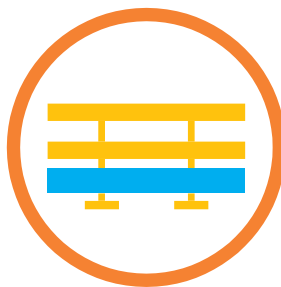
## 6. Other considerations

When working near excavations, pits, embankments, check that precautions are in place to prevent mobile plant from overturning or falling in. When working near overhead services, ensure arrangements are in place to avoid contact with them, (following the guidance in [HSE document GS6](#)).

Precautions include:



- separating the plant from nearby hazards



- providing physical measures e.g. stop blocks and fencing



- using banksmen

Maintaining mobile plant often requires access to high areas that pose a risk of falling from height, there for the activity must be subject to risk assessment with identified control measures put in place to ensure the task is conducted safely.



Related information can be found in the following Essential Standards:

- [Essential Standard 1 - Excavations](#)
- [Essential Standard 4 - Safe use of telehandlers](#)
- [Essential Standard 19 - Safe use of quick hitches](#)