



Plant and Fleet Bulletin

Issue no: BPQ/PB/13

SkillSearch On-Line Ref: PB13

Date: 05 October 2020

Serious Hand Injury – Telehandler Fork Adjustment

This Bulletin is issued to Divisional Directors, key divisional managers and department heads. It must be forwarded to Agents for briefing to site supervisors for briefing to all relevant framework personnel.

Agents are also responsible for communicating this bulletin to relevant members of the supply chain.

Summary

- **Serious hand injury to an untrained general operative assisting a plant operator to manually adjust the forks.**
- **An ungreased fork bar and lack of fork locking screws use contributed to the injury.**
- **Plant inspection check sheets not completed or checked adequately.**
- **The operator did not meet the required plant competence requirements for BAM Nuttall.**

An operative recently suffered a significant injury to his right thumb whilst assisting a plant operator to manually adjust the forks of a telehandler. The operative was passing when the operator was in the process of adjusting the forks for a forthcoming operation. The IP started to assist without prompt by moving the opposite fork to the operator. Whilst moving the fork his thumb became entrapped between the fork and the fork bar. This caused a comminuted open fracture to the right thumb and with a deep laceration requiring surgery and four weeks off work.



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3

Photo 1 & 2 show the machine that was involved in the incident. The fork bar was kept ungreased and without the locking screws under the forks in place. The operator stated the reason for the fork bar to be kept ungreased was so the forks did not move whilst operating the telehandler. Also that the locking pins were not used as the lack of grease meant they wouldn't move.

Photo 3 shows a separate machine example where the operator kept the bar greased for ease of moving the forks and used the locking screws. To the extent where he could move the forks with his feet when the locking screws were not tight, thus eliminating the need for any hand entrapment injuries.

The investigation found that the lack of greasing the bar made it very difficult to move the forks and increased the chances of an entrapment injury to anybody who tried to assist.

The experienced operator knew how to manually lift the fork a little to reduce friction to move the fork. The IP was not as experienced or trained and moved the fork with such force which resulted in an entrapment significant injury.

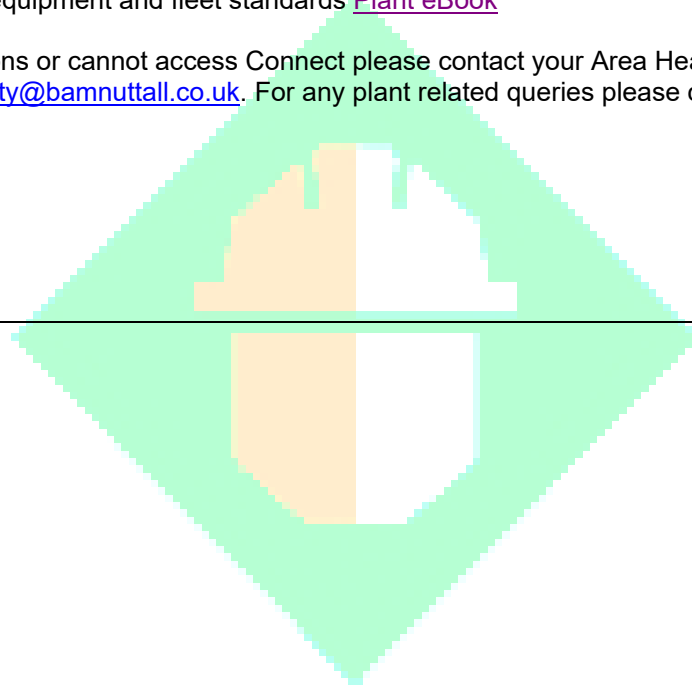
The investigation found non-compliances with the inspection regime for the telehandler.

The operator had a CSCS endorsed NPORS plant competence card. This does not comply with the BAM Nuttall policy of CPCS where the category exists.

Lessons learnt as a result of this incident include:

- People who are not trained for plant operations should not assist.
- Consideration is given to procurement of telehandlers with hydraulic fork adjustment rather than manual.
- Where manual fork adjustments are in place the fork bar is kept greased and locking screws utilised. Supervisors are to monitor this during spot check inspections.
- The appointed Plant Coordinator for the site ensures that the regime for plant inspection check sheets are completed timely and checked by supervision.
- Acceptable plant standards and operated plant competence are available in the externally hosted NS4.1: Plant, equipment and fleet standards [Plant eBook](#)

If you have any questions or cannot access Connect please contact your Area Health and Safety advisor or alternatively email safety@bamnutall.co.uk. For any plant related queries please contact your local BAM Nuttall Plant Depot



**YOUR SAFETY
IS MY SAFETY**

 **YOUR SAFETY
IS MY SAFETY - The Rules**

