

## SAFETY ALERT 96

### USE OF QUICK HITCHES

Please find attached safety alert raised by North Midland Construction NOMENCA

Please brief all on this safety alert NMCN No 12

In addition please ensure the following

- All excavator operators are trained in the use of the specific quick hitch being used
- The manufacturers operating manual is available in the excavator
- The excavator operator has completed the Excavator Operator Declaration Form and the Excavator Quick Hitch Attachment Register whenever excavator attachments are changed.
- Every time an attachment is changed the excavator is subject to the shake, rattle and roll test for quick hitches
- When the excavator is in operation a banksman is in attendance to alert the driver of people entering the working zone of the excavator and stop the work. In areas where it is deemed that a banksman is not required a full risk assessment must be carried out to detail the control measures that will be implemented to prevent people entering the exclusion zone..
- The risk assessments for working with and around excavators must cover the exclusion zones to be maintained.

If you require any further clarification or advice please contact your regional safety advisor in the first instance.

Incident:	Quick Hitch	Site:	
Date:	21 <sup>st</sup> September 2011		
Prepared by:	Mike Banks	Site Manager:	
Issued by:	Mike Banks		



NO. 12

## QUICK HITCH INCIDENT LEARNINGS

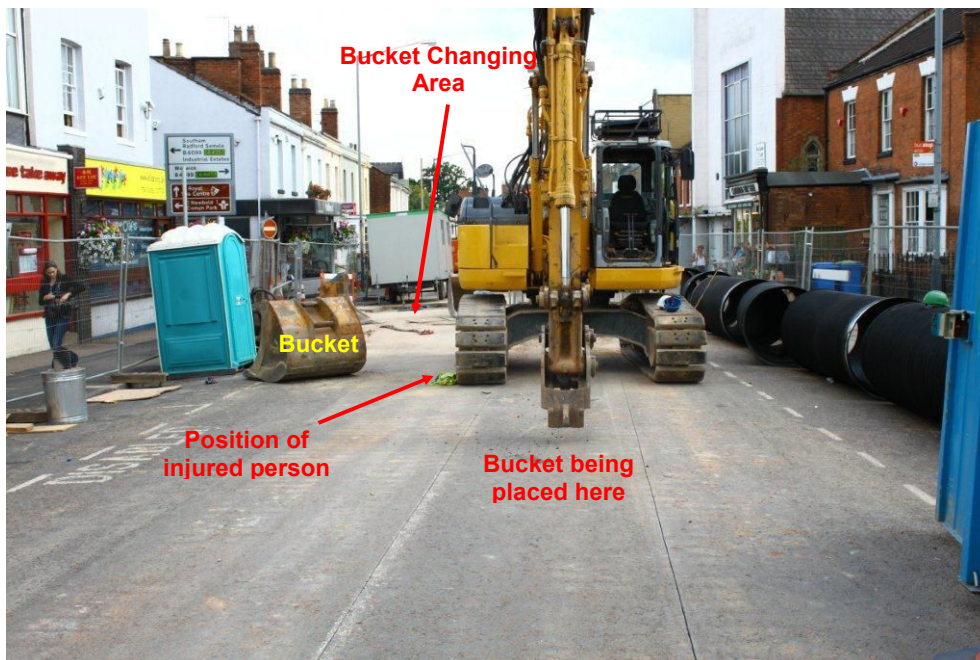
### INCIDENT SUMMARY

An excavator bucket needed to be moved from the bucket changing area by the trench to the rear of the machine.

The machine is fitted with a Hill Autoloc 3, double locking automatic quick hitch, which the operator hooked onto the bucket and then began 'slewing' anti-clockwise.

As he slewed he noticed an operative walking along the side of the machine and stopped slewing, the bucket came off and collided with the operative trapping him against the tracks of the machine and causing multiple fractures.

It was Friday afternoon and the site was under no pressure, they were clearing up before leaving for the weekend.



### INVESTIGATION FINDINGS

- The quick hitch has been inspected independently by the manufacturer and no defects were found with the hitch or bucket that could have given rise to the incident.
- The machine driver was fully trained in the safe operation of the machine and had received specific quick hitch training. He has also been competency assessed.
- Logs of hitch inspections were completed along with general inspections and briefings.
- The Root Cause has been identified. We have identified individual behaviour as the primary causal factor.
- Investigations are on-going.

### INITIAL LEARNINGS TO ENABLE IMPROVED PRACTICES

- ✓ **ALWAYS** comply with company procedures and manufacturer's guidelines (Operating Manual).
- ✓ **ALWAYS** check the security of any attachment **IMMEDIATELY** after attaching.
- ✓ **ENSURE** slew radius is clear of all personnel.
- ✓ **ONLY** fully trained and competent people to operate plant and equipment (including hitches).
- ✓ **If you have not had specific training on the use of hitches STOP and report to your manager.**

***"If it's not safe don't do it"***