

JUNE SAFETY THEME: SUSPENDED LOADS

A suspended load is something that is lifted and hangs above the ground. Working or walking immediately under or close to a suspended load is unsafe as the load can fall on you.

NEVER suspend a load over a person or equipment, or allow a person or vehicle to go under a suspended load.

Loads can slip or fall for many reasons, including:

- Wrong equipment used
- Faulty equipment or equipment failure
- Incorrect slinging or load restraint
- Load too heavy for equipment
- Overloaded attachment, e.g. bucket
- Equipment not level or stable during lifting, carrying or lowering
- Load strikes an obstacle, e.g. other equipment, building, powerline, etc.

Even a controlled load, can be hazardous if personnel or equipment enter the lift / set down zone without the lifting equipment operator noticing. Cranes and other lifting equipment can have large blind spots that can hide personnel and even vehicles.

Personnel approaching an area where lifting operations are being conducted **MUST** get approval from the crane / lifting unit operator via positive radio communication, **before** entering the work zone (which should be signed and barricaded).



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

The most serious consequence of a person being struck by a suspended load is death. Other risks include injury, equipment and / or load damage and production loss.

For more information watch the [Suspended Loads Video](#) on the OTML Site Portal.

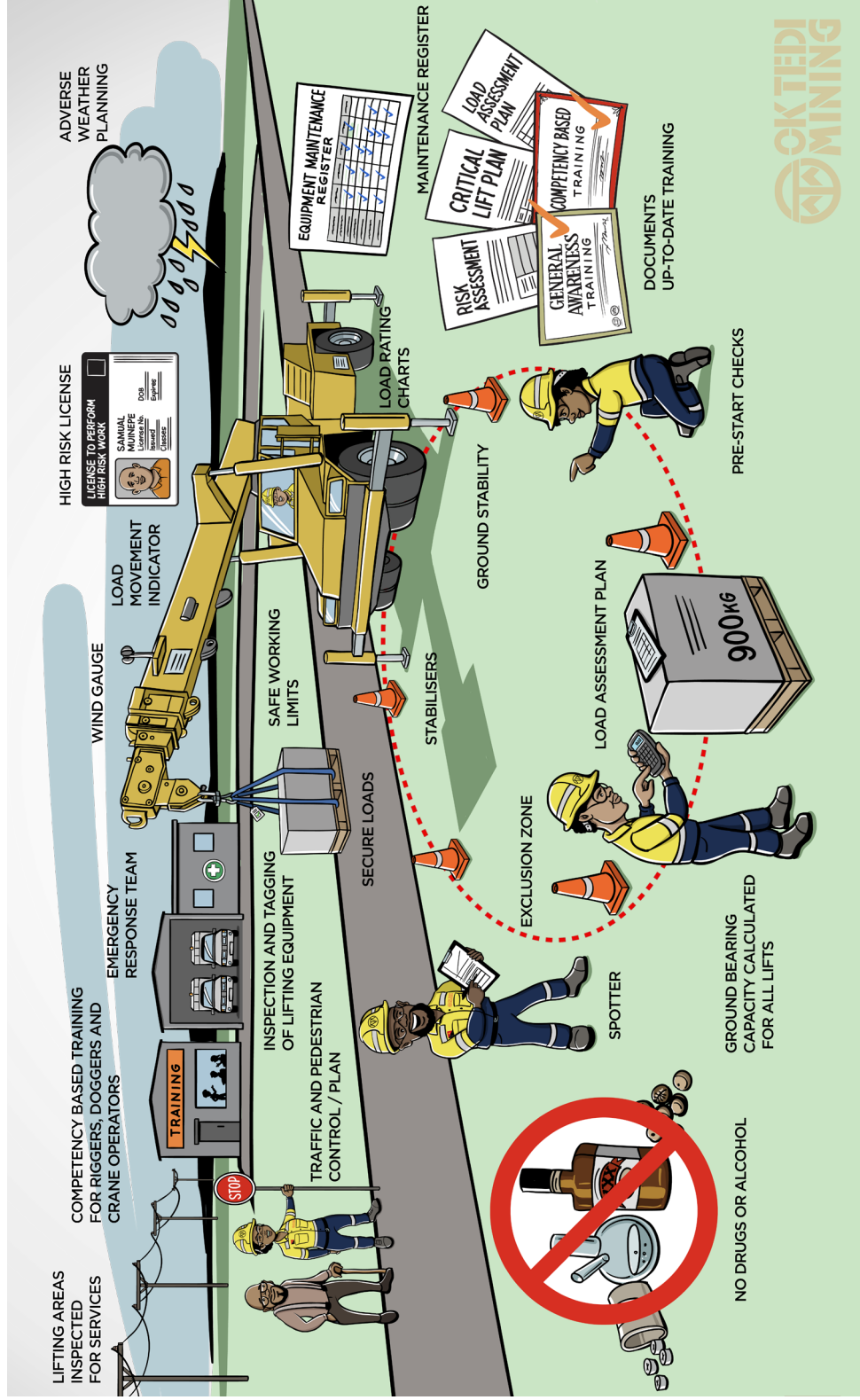
Be the CONTROL not the HAZARD

1. Be fit for work.
2. Be trained, competent and authorised before performing lifting operations.
3. Do a risk assessment before every job, something may have changed.
4. Inspect the site and equipment before starting operations.
5. Set up a drop zone / exclusion zone.
6. Have a spotter in place.
7. Only use equipment that is suitable for the task and conditions.
8. Refer to load charts and stay within equipment safe working load limits.
9. Have a lift plan and approved Authorisation to Work (ATW) in place if required.
10. Follow procedures.
11. Use a trained dogger / rigger to help secure the load.
12. Have a plan in place for bad weather, Do not lift in storms.
13. Be prepared to respond to an emergency if things go wrong.
14. Refer to the **Key Control Checklist (See over)** to make sure all key controls are in place.

If you must stop the lifting operation at any time, the load must be lowered to the ground. Do not leave the controls of the lifting equipment while the load is suspended in the air, unless in the case of a fire or other life threatening emergency.



BE THE CONTROL NOT THE HAZARD



RISKS

- Accident, injury, fatality
- Equipment damage
- Production / Income loss

KEY CONTROL CHECKLIST

- Am I fit for work?
- Am I trained, competent and authorised for the task?
- Do I understand that conditions can change and I must do a risk assessment before each lift?
- Have I inspected the work area, including the pick up and set down points, for hazards?
- Is an exclusion zone set up under and around the drop zone?
- Have I inspected the equipment I will be using?
- Have I ensured that equipment is fit for purpose?
- Have I checked that the safe working load limit of all equipment is suitable for the task?
- Is an Authority to Work or other work clearance required? If so, is this in place?
- Is a lift plan in place and do all persons involved in the lift understand what to do?
- Am I aware of the procedures I must follow?
- Is a spotter or sentry in place, if needed?
- Is the load properly secured, e.g. by a dogger or rigger?
- Is a plan in place in case of bad weather?
- Am I prepared for an emergency should it happen?

OPERATOR SUSPENDED LOADS CONTROL CHECKLIST

OPERATOR / EMPLOYEE

- Am I fit for work (no drugs or alcohol)?
- Am I trained, competent and authorised for the task I am about to do?
- Do I understand that conditions can change and I must do a risk assessment before each lift?
- Have I inspected the work area, including the pick up and set down points, for hazards?
- Is an exclusion zone set up under and around the drop zone?
- Have I inspected all the equipment that I will be using?
- Have I ensured that equipment is fit for purpose?
- Have I checked that the safe working load limit of all equipment is suitable for the task?
- Is an Authority to Work or other work clearance required? If so, is this in place?
- Is a lift plan in place and do all persons involved in the lift understand what to do?
- Am I aware of the procedures I must follow?
- Is a spotter or sentry in place, if needed?
- Is the load properly secured, e.g. by a dogger or rigger?
- Is a plan in place in case of bad weather?
- Am I prepared for an emergency should it happen?

SUPERVISORS / SUPERINTENDENT

- Are all persons fit, competent and authorised for the assigned task?
- Has a risk assessment been completed for the lifting task?
- If required, has an Authority to Work (permit) been developed and authorised?
- Have all relevant persons read, understood and signed the permit?
- Has an exclusion zone been established to prevent personnel from entering the lifting zone?
- Have pre-operational inspections been performed on all equipment, including lifting gear?
- Are all relevant persons aware of the plan for the task, and their role and responsibilities?
- Have procedures been provided for the task, and are personnel aware of the requirements?
- Are specialist personnel (spotter/sentry, dogger/rigger) being used to assist lifting personnel?
- Is a plan in place in case things go wrong and are all persons aware of what to do?

MANAGERS / GENERAL MANAGERS

- Are training systems in place to ensure competencies are achieved and maintained?
- Is a risk management / work permit process in place for high risk tasks?
- Are procedures in place and being followed?
- Does equipment undergo regular inspections and maintenance according to required schedule?
- Is an emergency response plan developed that includes the risk of being struck by a suspended load?
- Are emergency response resources available and in good working order?
- Could the approved practices for lifting operations be improved?