

STRATEGIC FORUM PLANT SAFETY GROUP

SAFETY NOTICE FOR OPERATORS - 16/11/09

Issued by Construction Plant-hire Association for the Strategic Forum Plant Safety Group

SAFETY NOTICE: Ten points you should be aware of now.

These points are applicable to all types of quick hitch - manual, semi automatic, and all fully automatic types, including those that lock onto both pins.

1. Do not operate the excavator if there are other workers in the machine's working range. Never allow other workers to work under the bucket or attachment. Ask your site supervisors to help enforce this rule.
2. You have personal and legal responsibility to use all quick hitches safely. Serious misuse of quick hitches may well be treated as gross misconduct which could well lead to dismissal.
3. **Operators have received criminal convictions and prison sentences for misuse of quick hitches.**
4. **Do not start work unless you are fully competent** - You must know how to use the specific quick hitch in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If in doubt report to your supervisor and ask for additional information, or instruction.
5. Check that you have specific instructions for the combination of machine, quick hitch and attachment you are to use. Follow the instructions.
6. **Do not start work unless you have been briefed on, understand and are able to work to, the safe system of work** (a safe way of doing the job).
7. Make sure that the quick hitch is properly engaged every time you change an attachment. It is essential that this is done by close inspection at the quick hitch; this will normally require you to get down from the cab.
8. Do not use shortcuts such as "pick and place" (moving attachments without properly engaging the locking devices).
9. Tell site supervisors that you have to fully confirm that the quick hitch is properly engaged. Make sure they allow you time to do this. Your site supervisors will check that you are confirming proper engagement.
10. Carry out the proper daily and shift checks to make sure that machines, quick hitches and attachments are in good order. Report to your supervisor or site management if you find a problem.

Using quick hitches with other attachments

The site may want you to use quick hitches with attachments other than a bucket in normal configuration. However, if a specific application, such as the fitting of vibratory hammers or reversing of buckets, is not explicitly allowed by the manufacturer, you should assume that it is not allowed, and you should not use the quick hitch for this attachment or application. Quick hitches should only be used with attachments and in applications as specified by the manufacturer.