

Tower Crane Technical Information Note

TIN 034

Ensuring the Safe Access of Tower Crane Operators on Site

This Technical Information Note sets out arrangements for ensuring that tower crane operators have safe access to and egress from their cranes.

Employers (including Principal Contractors and Contractors) have a duty under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to ensure the safety of personnel on a construction site at all times. In the case of tower crane operators this extends to ensuring that they are able to access the cabs of their cranes safely. In recent years there have been a number of incidents where tower crane operators have been taken ill whilst climbing up or down the crane unobserved. There is also a risk at dusk or darkness where the path from the base of the crane to the site exit is poorly lit. The operator is often one of the last people to leave site, due to the time taken to climb down the tower, and if they are taken ill or fall they may well not be discovered until the following morning.

Two measures will help to avoid this:-

1. The provision of an adequately lit walkway from the base of the crane (See **Figure 1**).
2. The allocation of a "Buddy" whose duty is to ensure that the operator reaches the tower crane cab safely, when climbing up the crane and reaches the site main access ways safely, when climbing down the crane (See **Figure 2**). The "Buddy" should be able to contact the site emergency rescue team promptly in the event of an incident.

NOTE: It is essential that employers (including the Principal Contractor) ensure that the "Buddy" is formally appointed in writing and that the details of the appointment are recorded in the Method Statement/Lifting Plan.

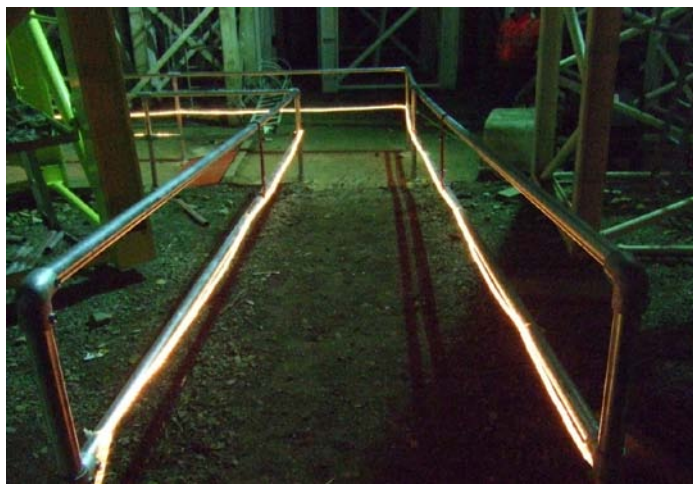


Figure 1 - Lighting the Access to the Crane Base

Figure 2 - A Buddy Observing Safe Access