

Safety Alert

Excavator Height Restrictor

Introduction

The following safety alert is primarily for those companies operating in the rental sector and concerns the fitting of a temporary height restrictor.

What Happened

The hydraulic connections highlighted were fitted incorrectly to a 5 tonne excavator. When the height restrictor reached its set limit, oil supply was inhibited to the rams resulting in the boom dropping to the floor and bearing down which subsequently lifted the machine off the ground. This situation occurred while the machine was in a “live” electricity sub-station.

What can we learn

- It is essential that this height restrictor equipment is fitted by the appropriate manufacturer or using a clear set of installation instructions, with a step by step guide incorporated into workshop operating procedures.
- Products affected – excavators fitted with a temporary height restrictor

Immediate Actions

- Review existing installation procedures to ensure the use of an appropriate manufacturer, or immediate implementation of training in the safe fitting of height restrictors with an approved manufacturer.
- Immediate inspection of all current machines out on hire to ensure height restrictor is fitted according to manufacturer’s standards and to ensure installation procedures have been followed.
- Introduce verification system that will validate the height restrictor has been fitted by an approved manufacturer or by a trained and competent fitter who has undergone manufacturer’s training to ensure the correct fitting procedure has been followed and the machine is fit for purpose

