HEALTH AND SAFETY AUTHORITY

SAFE SYSTEM OF WORK PLAN
(SSWP)

BUILDING AND MONUMENT MAINTENANCE

PICTOGRAMS

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Pictograms Explained

SUPERVISION

Supervision, generally by the person in charge (e.g. the General Services Supervisor/Town Foreman), is essential to ensure the activity is completed as planned, and to a safe system of work.

SAFE PASS

As identified in the Construction Regulations, all people engaged in construction work must possess a current Safe Pass card, having successfully completed the one-day safe-pass training. Safe Pass cards must be renewed as appropriate. Proof of such training should be available on site.

PLANT/EQUIPMENT CERTIFICATION

It is a legal requirement for most construction plant to be tested and examined regularly, in particular all lifting appliances and lifting gear. The certificates relating to these must be kept up to date.

CSCS

The Construction Skills Certification Scheme, as prescribed in the Construction Regulations, identifies certain skills on construction sites that require mandatory training. On successful completion of this training, persons are given a CSCS card. CSCS cards must be renewed as appropriate. Proof of such training should be available on site.

In regard to construction work on roads, there is a further CSCS requirement for the person with specific responsibility and the supervision of the erection, modification and dismantling of signing, lighting and guarding on roads to possess the relevant CSCS card. There is a also a requirement that if the person possessing the CSCS card for signing, lighting and guarding on roads is not present when works are in progress and workers are present that a person possessing a CSCS card for health and safety at roadworks must be present on site.

COMMUNICATION/INDUCTION

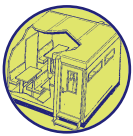
Every new contractor or new employee on a site should undergo an induction when they first arrive on site. This induction should inform the attendees about: site rules and procedures; the arrangements for their safety and welfare on site; and who the key responsible persons (duty holders) are.
Emergency plans/procedures should be explained at inductions (they must also be available in writing), so that if an incident occurs on site the risk of injury to workers and people in the vicinity is minimised. These measures must also deal with rescue. When developing the emergency plans, it may be necessary to liaise with the local emergency services.
Timely and good communication is essential at all times. Clear communication helps to ensure that tasks are understood and completed in a safe manner.

WC & WASHING

Arrangements must be made to provide toilets and hand-washing facilities on all sites. The facility must include a sufficient supply of hot or warm water and cold running water, toilet tissue, soap and towels. The facility must be conveniently accessible and be kept clean and hygienic. In addition, it is recommended that anti-bacterial wipes be provided on all sites.

For exceptionally short duration work (5 days or less), a nearby convenient facility must be identified and the location communicated to the personnel on site. Such facilities may include: local depot; mobile welfare unit (under the control of the contractor); use of public toilets where it is impractical to return to other facilities; and – in limited circumstances – pre-arranged (preferably in writing) use of private facilities. Where public and private toilets are used they need to be readily accessible to the site, be open at all relevant times, be at no cost to the employee, be of an acceptable standard in terms of cleanliness and be provided with hand-washing facilities. Depending on the number of persons at the work place and the duration and nature of the work activity, further arrangements may apply as prescribed in the Construction Regulations.

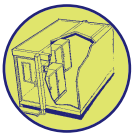
CANTEEN & SHELTER



Arrangements must be made to provide a facility for workers to take breaks. Minimum requirements include: a facility for boiling water, seats with backs and tables with impermeable surfaces. It must be kept in a clean, hygienic condition, have adequate light, be properly

ventilated and not be used for storing building materials or plant equipment.
Depending on the number of persons at the work place and the nature of the work activity further arrangements may apply as prescribed in the Construction Regulations.

DRYING/CHANGING



Arrangements must be made to provide an area, separate from the canteen facility, where workers can change and dry clothes.
Depending on the number of persons at the work place and the nature of the work activity further arrangements may apply as prescribed in the Construction Regulations.

DRINKING WATER

An adequate supply of wholesome drinking water must be provided at a convenient point (or points).

FIRST AID

First-aid equipment must be provided and maintained, and be easily accessible. At least one first aider should be available if the site-specific Risk Assessment shows that this is necessary.
A trained first aider should generally be available to all road workers.

PPE

The primary means of protecting the safety and health of employees must be measures to eliminate work place risks at source: firstly by technical means; secondly by organisational provision; and thirdly by collective protection measures. Where these measures are not sufficient, Personal Protective Equipment (additional protection to the individual) must be used to protect against hazards which are unavoidable.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC / LIVE TRAFFIC

LIAISON

The safe coordination of site-related work and members of the public requires direct communication between the employer and the property dwellers affected by the work as well as other members of the public that may be affected by the work, e.g. passing pedestrians etc.
This liaison in most cases continues for the duration of the works so that any changes can be highlighted and knock-on safety effects can be dealt with in advance.

WORK ORGANISATION

Consideration should be given to the property dwellers. Work should be planned in such a way as to minimise the risk to members of the public. More hazardous operations, e.g. hot works should be carried out at an appropriate time.

FENCING/HOARDING

Maintenance activities should not present an undue risk to members of the public, especially to children. Suitable fencing must be used to secure sites. Particularly on street-side works, adequately designed and constructed hoardings should be erected to secure the site work. Arrangements must be put in place to ensure that normal pedestrian and public vehicular traffic are not put at undue risk as a result of any changes made.

BARRIERS

All ongoing works – e.g. driveway/footpath works – must be protected with barriers and identified with warning signs in order to segregate members of the public (e.g. property dwellers and visitors) from the works.

PEDESTRIAN WAY

Where members of the public have to access close to or around maintenance work, suitable safe routes must be provided to protect them. Consideration must also be given to people with disabilities. Maintenance debris must be kept clear from such public areas. Dust, muck, objects likely to fall, protruding objects, trip hazards etc. must be removed. Where reinstatement is required, it must be completed without delay.

WARNING SIGNS

People approaching maintenance work must be given advance warning, especially where specific hazards exist. Warning signs must be erected and where necessary, give clear directions to passing members of the public.

TRAFFIC CONTROL

Traffic Control must be planned and all traffic routes in public areas must consider the safety of members of the public as well as workers. Measures to control traffic may include: use of warning signs, bollards and flagmen. Vehicular speeds must also be controlled.

TOOL & EQUIPMENT SECURITY

Tools and equipment must never be left unattended and must always be kept in a safe location, e.g. in a toolbox.

HOUSEKEEPING

All construction related debris must be kept clear from public areas including the removal of muck, dust, trip hazards, protruding objects and falling objects etc. Also where reinstatement is required it must be completed without delay.

INFESTATION

SURVEY/ASSESS

Before work is to commence, the area should be visually assessed for infestation. If identified no personnel are authorised to enter without appropriate controls being in place.

DECONTAMINATION/EXTERMINATION

In some cases decontamination of the area may be required using fumes or chemicals. Extermination of pests such as rodents etc. may also be required in certain cases. Competent personnel must be engaged to carry out this procedure. Only authorised personnel are permitted to enter the building until the process is complete.

SPECIALIST PPE

Specialist PPE must be worn when entering an infested building. Consult your supervisor for details of PPE.

WEIL'S DISEASE/HYGIENE

It is essential that an effective hygiene procedure is in place and adequate washing facilities are provided. In areas where animals such as rats are present the risk of Leptospirosis or Weil's disease can be high so adequate safety measures will need to be taken.

DUST

WET

Wetting, damping down areas prevent dust from being dispersed in the air.

VENTILATION

Ensure appropriate ventilation to allow enough fresh air into the work area, e.g. when carrying out painting works ensure windows/doors are open.

EXTRACTION

Local exhaust systems remove dust directly from the area in which it is produced.

WORKING WITH ELECTRICITY

SERVICE SUPPLIER

Where work is to begin and services are unknown, the service supplier, e.g. ESB, must be contacted to obtain drawings and advice on the position of all electrical supply cables.

ISOLATION/LOCK OUT

Where electrical work is required, isolation and tagging off systems must be used. All electrical work must be closely supervised by trained and competent persons. The electricity regulations and the ECTI rules must be fully complied with.

COMPETENCE

All work on electrical services must be carried out by suitably trained and competent persons.

SAFETY FILE/OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE MANUALS

O & M manuals should be consulted wherever necessary, prior to work beginning, to ascertain what installations exist in a building and to discover all relevant information on how to work safely with this electric installation. The file needs to be updated to reflect any relevant works completed.

WARNING SIGNS

Warning signs must be used across the site to alert workers or others when they are approaching high-risk areas (e.g. deep excavation). Signs must be placed at an appropriate location, and be as sufficiently clear and unambiguous as to make it possible for all workers and people to understand them. Signs should always be complied with. Members of the public approaching construction work must be given advance warning, particularly where specific hazards exist. **Refer to the Safety Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations.**

BARRIERS

Suitable barriers should be placed around excavations when work is in progress; typically, the barrier should be set and secured a safe distance from the crown (leading edge) of the excavation, e.g. 2 metres (decided on by a competent person). At the end of each day, these barriers should completely surround the excavation and be strong and high enough to prevent people falling into the excavation or accessing the work area.

PERMIT TO WORK

To ensure that appropriate controls are rigidly adhered to when high-risk work is being carried out, a permit-to-work system should be used. This ensures that works do not begin until all the safety and environmental controls are in place, and signed off.

WIRE/CABLE LOCATOR

A wire/cable locator should be used by a competent person to help identify the position of wires and cables in walls etc. prior to drilling, cutting etc.

HAND HELD EQUIPMENT

SELECTION/SUITABILITY

Before any piece of equipment is selected and used to carry out an activity, it must be checked for its suitability for the task (e.g. accessories available, reach capability, etc.). The potential risks to workers from vibration and noise emissions must be considered.

VOLTAGE

All portable electric tools must be rated at 110V or less, unless its rating exceeds 2 kilovolt amperes.

CABLES CHECK PROTECTION

Before using any electric appliance on site, including use of transformers and extension reels, the cables and connectors attached must be examined to ensure that such components are not damaged. Trailing electric cables which are at risk from damage because of their position must

be protected from such damage, or a safer cable location used.

GUARDS

Many hand/portable tools have rotating shafts and components, others due to their application will emit fragments including dust and sparks. Such tools must have suitable guards fitted, e.g. circular saw guards, abrasive wheels guards etc.

MAINTENANCE

All equipment should undergo regular service and maintenance checks, to ensure continued fitness for use. It is good practice to keep written records of such maintenance checks.

REPLACE DAMAGED PARTS

All equipment should be checked before use, and any damaged parts must be replaced before work begins.

COMPRESSORS & WHIP CHECKS

Compressors must be maintained and serviced regularly. All connections and flexible hosing must be in good condition and replaced if damaged. All guards must be secured before starting, so that no rotating pulleys or belts are exposed. 'Whip checks' (safety clips) should be used at connections on all pneumatic hose lines. This control prevents the hose from whipping around in the event of the connection failing. The safety clips must all be inspected prior to the compressor being turned on.

GUARDING IN PLACE

The most appropraite cutting tool, with regard to safety, should be selected to carry out cutting of materials and the appropriate guarding must be in place.

CON SAW/ABRASIVE WHEELS

Trained persons must only use abrasive wheels such as con saws and road saws. Before use, a visual check on the machine or tool should be carried out, the guard must be properly adjusted and the appropriate PPE must be used. The maximum operating speed marked on the wheel must not be exceeded. Only a trained and appropriately nominated person can change wheels.

CARTRIDGE TOOLS

Use of cartridge tool guns and staple guns requires careful planning, to assess what will be fired into, and who or what may be behind the target. People should be kept a safe distance from the firing zone. Whoever uses these tools should always wear goggles and ear protection. Such tools must be maintained in good working order, and should be operated only by trained persons.

WORKING FROM HEIGHTS INCLUDING ROOF WORK AND FALLING OBJECTS

RISK ASSESS

Every work activity on site needs to be risk-assessed, to identify potential hazards (e.g. working at heights, working with live electricity, hazardous chemicals or manual handling at height, etc.). If there is risk of injury, appropriate controls must be put in place. If the hazard cannot be eliminated, the risk must be reduced as far as possible.

EDGE PROTECTION

Persons must not be at risk from falling though openings, or over edges. All persons accessing or working at or close to openings that could lead to such falls must be protected, and guarded from falls, includes protection from falling off stairs. Such measures must include handrails, barriers, and toe boards etc.

MOBILE ELEVATING WORK PLATFORMS (MEWP)

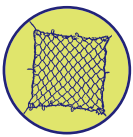
A Boom Hoist has an extendable folding boom with cage attached. It can be used for work at height if the ground conditions are suitable. Boom hoists can also be used to gain access to remote areas. Selection must be based on suitability for the task; the manufacturer's guidelines for safe use must be followed fully. Only competent and trained operators should

control the movement of these hoists. Other vehicles should be strictly controlled in the vicinity of hoists. Scissors Lifts, which can extend to significant heights using hydraulic scissors movement, can be used where scaffold platforms are not possible. Selection must be based on suitability for the task, with particular attention given to the ground conditions, and that the manufacturer's guidelines for safe use can be followed fully. Only competent and trained operators should control the movement of these.

GOODS/PERSON HOIST

Hoists include 'genie' lifts and block and tackle systems. Hoists can be used on occasion to lift and lower goods. Hoists will on occasion be required to be raised or lowered to different levels. Before the hoist is first used, or if it undergoes a modification or repair it will require a test or examination or both by a competent person in order to comply with legal requirements. The results of such tests or examinations must be entered onto the approved forms.
This examination will need to be repeated every 6 months by a competent person.

NETS/BEAN BAGS



Safety nets, bean bags and air bags should be considered for working at heights applications where there is a risk of falls. Before use these safety nets and bags should be tested, inspected and certified. They must be installed by competent, trained people.

OVERHEAD LINES

Contact with overhead lines can kill. Never erect scaffolding close to or under overhead lines. Never work close to, or access close to, or under overhead lines. Consult ESB Code of Practice for Avoiding Danger from Overhead Electricity Lines for further guidance.

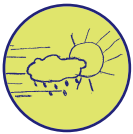
SIGNS

Suitable and appropriate warning signs must be used, so that advance warning is given to workers or other in the vicinity when approaching particular hazards. Signs should also be used to convey safety information, e.g. "scaffold un-safe to use" etc. Signs must be clear, unambiguous, be at the appropriate location and be in a language understandable by the relevant workers or persons on site. Where signs are used they should always be complied with.

PROPPING

Propping is any temporary structure used to support a permanent structure while it is not self-supporting. Propping is required during refurbishment to give temporary support to prevent collapse due to overloading of structural components during the work, e.g. the replacement of windows. The responsible person must ensure that the correct numbers of props are installed correctly and that the units are supported as indicated on the construction drawings. Any failure of propping could result in the collapse of the permanent structure, which could result in injury or death.

WEATHER



Adverse weather, such as high winds and ice can lead to unsafe working conditions. In high winds or icy weather, it may be necessary to cease work at height in exposed areas. Also in high wind conditions loose materials may need to be removed or tied down, to prevent them blowing or falling. In hot sunny weather, sun protection must be considered, as well as the provision of drinking water to prevent de-hydration.

LADDER ACCESS

All ladder access must be erected by competent people who will ensure: adequate length of ladder, tying and footing, lack of defects. Access onto and egress off ladders must be such that workers do not have to cross large gaps through which they could fall before they have a firm handhold on the ladder.

SAFE LADDER

All ladders, including step ladders, must be carefully selected for each task, free from patent defects, of correct length, carefully tied, set at the correct angle and, where necessary, footed. Ladders must be controlled and checked frequently to ensure they are fit to use.

TRESTLE PLATFORM

Trestle work platforms should not be used close to leading edges or to span open holes. They must only be erected by competent persons, be free from defects and be suitable for their purpose. Only ‘locating pins’ which the manufacturer recommends should be used, and care must be taken to insert these correctly. The trestle legs

must be on firm foundations so they are not likely to slip or shift. The platform level must be fully boarded and not overloaded. Appropriate fall protection/edge protection to be in place.

MOBILE SCAFFOLD

Mobile scaffolds must be carefully planned and erected by trained personnel in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The spread of the out-riggers fitted to each corner of the scaffold depends on the height of the tower. When in use the tower must be secured, and each wheel brake locked. The platform must be fully boarded, and be complete with mid rails and top guardrails. Before the platform is moved to another location, workers must descend from the tower. They must not resume work until it has been secured in its new position. The mobile scaffold must be inspected before use to ensure it is in good working order (e.g. the wheel brakes) and that all components are in place.

SCAFFOLD

Scaffold platforms should where possible be used as working platforms for all work at height and in particular for all works above two metres. The scaffold platform must be designed, planned and subsequently erected by fully trained personnel, in accordance with all relevant Legislation, Codes of Practice, and manufacturers' instructions. Scaffolds should include dedicated ladder access bays, and where required properly constructed loading bays. Hand-Over Certificates and the use of relevant signage, e.g. capacity of loading bays, is recommended.

Working platforms are locations and areas for carrying out maintenance at height safely. It is taken to mean a work area that provides protection and prevents the worker falling to a lower level. Generally it is used to refer to scaffold platforms, but where scaffolds cannot be erected, it can also refer to other safe platforms such as, MEWPs, scaffold towers.

CHUTES

Chutes should be used for discarding materials. Materials should never be thrown from scaffolding or windows etc. The Chute should extend down into a waste skip. Exclusion zones under the drop zones should always be created where materials and debris is discarded.

EXCLUSION ZONE

All persons – whether workers or members of the public – should be kept away from maintenance and plant operations. As a general rule, persons should not be working under an area where loads are being lifted or within the working radius of a machine jib. People should be kept a safe distance from working plant; barriers should be used where possible.

'A'-FRAME LADDER

A-frame ladders should not be used close to leading edges, or over or close to internal openings where workers risk falling. When in use, they must have their restraint cord fully extended, to prevent ladder from splaying open. A-frame ladders should only be used where using a safe platform is impractical. They should not be used as a support for planks to create a work platform. They should be used by only one person at a time for low risk, short duration work.

ROOF LADDERS

Roof ladders should always be used on sloping roofs. They should be used in conjunction with properly constructed scaffold platforms.
Roof ladders must be CE-marked (See list of abbreviations at end) and free from defects. Roof ladders should reach and anchor over the ridge.

EXAMINATION AND INSPECTION

All equipment used for working at height must be inspected by a competent person to ensure it is free from defects and constructed and maintained in a safe manner. Records of these inspections must be kept. (HSA GA3 Form can be used for this).

STORAGE

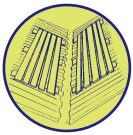
All materials should be stored where they cannot fall on to workers below. Materials should be kept tidy and stable making sure that all access routes are kept clear. Working platforms should not be cluttered or blocked with materials, there must always be adequate space for safe access. All loose materials should be removed on an ongoing basis.

FALL PROTECTION AND RESCUE

Fall-arrest systems should be used in conjunction with a rescue plan. Safety harnesses with a fall-arrest system (including other components such as lanyard, shock absorber and anchors) are used to prevent a person from hitting the ground in the event of a fall. Safety harnesses and personal fall-arrest equipment are not a substitute for working platforms or collective protection such as safety nets. Each component in the fall-arrest

system must be inspected before use. All fall arrest equipment must be examined by a competent person at appropriate intervals (as set out in European standards, by risk assessment and by manufacturers guidelines).

CRAWLING BOARDS



If required to work on or access fragile roofs including work adjacent to roof lights, crawling boards may be used. They are intended to spread the load such that point load does not exceed the load which may result in such roofs breaking. The selection of suitable crawling boards for particular use should be made by competent persons.

INTERNAL PLATFORMS

Suitable platforms for working at height internally must be identified through risk assessment and constructed by trained competent persons. Collective edge protection, e.g. scaffolding, handrail systems etc. must be prioritised over individual protection, e.g. use of harness etc.

LONE WORKING / VIOLENCE

ACCOMPANIED/ATTENDED

Due to a variety of different potential hazards some tasks will require more than one person to attend. This will be determined by risk assessment by a competent person.

COMMUNICATION/ALARM

Effective communication systems and 'man down' alarm systems can provide some controls to certain lone working situations.

CONTROLLED PERIODIC CHECKS

The use of controlled periodic checks can be used to monitor the safety of a person in a lone working situation.

RISK ASSESS/TRAINING

All lone working must be risk assessed and the appropriate controls to the specific lone working situation must be identified and implemented. Training and instruction in lone working controls/ systems being used will be necessary.

LIAISON

Effective liaison with all persons involved or associated with a job is critical. Forward planning and communication will help people understand what task is to be undertaken, how it may effect them and allow then input into any controls being implemented.

PLANT & LIFTING OPERATIONS

SELECTION/SUITABILITY

Selecting the correct type of lifting equipment for the task is crucial. Many factors must be considered, including: the number of lifts required, the size and weight of the lifts (SWL), the lift distance (reach capability), and the ground conditions. The lifting equipment must be properly certified. The ground area on which any lifting equipment is to be used should be examined to ensure that it is capable of taking the applied loads.

CHECK LIFTING GEAR

Lifting gear means any gear or cable by which a load can be attached to a lifting appliance. It includes chain sling, rope sling, hook, shackle or eye bolt. Before lifting gear is used, it must be examined to check for safe working load (SWL) and so that defects, which may reduce its capacity to function safely, are repaired. Lifting gear must be appropriately certified prior to use.

EXCLUSION ZONE

All persons – whether workers or members of the public – should be kept away from construction plant operations. People should not work within the working radius of an excavator boom. They should be kept at a safe distance from working plant. Barriers should be used where possible.

SWL/PLAN LIFT

All lifting operations should be planned to ensure that they are carried out in a safe manner. A risk assessment must be undertaken and a method statement should be prepared in advance of the operation.

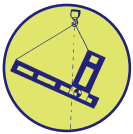
Lifting appliances and lifting gear should never be used to lift beyond their stated safe working load (SWL). This, as assessed by a competent person, is the maximum load that an item of lifting equipment may raise, lower or suspend under the particular service conditions.

All lifting points and lifting eyes must be carefully designed to take the maximum load that is to be applied.

SLINGER/SIGNALLER

A certified slinger and signaller must always be used where loads are being slung and lifted and safe direction is given to operators of lifting appliances. The slinger/signaller directing the movements of lifting equipment should be easily identifiable to the operator of the lifting equipment (e.g. by the wearing of uniquely identifiable high-visibility clothing, and/or the use of radio call signs).

LOAD STABILITY



The load must be checked to ensure that it is stable and properly secured to the lifting appliance before lifting begins.

OVERHEAD LINES

The operation and movement of plant and equipment close to overhead lines can be dangerous. Warnings should be erected a safe distance either side of the lines.

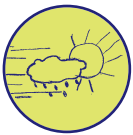
Lifting operations should never be carried out close to or under live overhead lines. Burns and electrocution can result if cranes, excavators or raised tipper-truck bodies touch or come close enough to overhead power lines to cause arcing. Consult the ESB Code of Practice for Avoiding Danger form Overhead Electricity Lines for further guidance.

EXAMINATION & INSPECTION

It is a legal requirement for most construction plant to be tested and examined regularly, in particular all lifting appliances and lifting gear. The certificates relating to these must be kept up to date.

A competent person is required to examine and inspect plant and equipment. Any defects must be noted and remedial action to repair the plant should take place immediately, or the plant should be replaced. A report of the inspection/examination should be recorded on the approved form.

WEATHER



Bad weather can lead to unsafe working conditions. In high winds lifting equipment must not be operated in wind speeds that are in excess of those specified by the equipment manufacturer. Also, in high winds or icy weather, it may be necessary to cease work at height in exposed areas, loose materials may need to be removed or tied down to prevent them blowing or falling.

GLAZING SUCTION

Where glazing is lifted into place by suction lifting devices, such attachments must be regularly inspected to ensure that adequate suction is maintained over the required period.

LOCKING ATTACHMENTS

Ancillary equipment used in connection with any construction plant must be secured at all times (e.g. quick hitch with bucket or rock breaker to excavator etc.). This may require the insertion of locking pins, to prevent inadvertent dropping of the attachment.

REVERSE WARNING DEVICES

With plant that has restricted visibility, and particularly during reversing operations, suitable warning devices or sight-seeing devices – such as an audible warning, CCTV, convex mirrors, flashing beacons etc. – must be fitted in compliance with current legislation, typically to allow vision from the driver's seat of all points around the machine more than 1 metre high and 1 metre out from the machine.

EXCAVATOR/CHECK VALVES

Excavators can be used as cranes when lifting gear is attached to the machine at a specifically designated point. To carry out such tasks, the excavator will normally have check valves (non-return valves) fitted to the main boom and the dipper arm's lifting cylinders. This is to ensure that in the event of a hydraulic or motor failure no part of the equipment will suddenly fall. The SWL for the excavator – lifting gear configuration should be the same at all radii, and should not exceed the load which the machine is designed to lift in its least stable configuration. Before the excavator is first used as a crane, a competent person must certify it.

HIDDEN SERVICES

SERVICE SUPPLIER e.g. ESB, Bord Gais, Local Authority etc.

Where construction work is to begin, and services are unknown the relevant utility company must be contacted to obtain drawings and advice on the position of underground and overhead services.

DIVERT/OFF

Before work near overhead lines, underground cables, gas services or other underground services begins, the relevant utility company must be asked to divert the service away from the work zone, or if necessary to switch off or stop the service temporarily to allow work to proceed safely.

SURVEY/ASSESS

Before work is to commence, the area should be scanned with a detector to verify the position of any services. The position of services should be carefully marked to identify their location to personnel.

DETECTOR & MARK

Before the ground is broken, the area should be scanned with a detector by a competent person to verify the position of any services. Any variations should be noted on the drawings. The position of the service should be carefully marked, to ensure that subsequent work does not come into contact with it.

HAND DIG

Mechanical cutting or digging at or immediately close to underground services is generally not permitted except in very limited circumstances and only under strict supervision. Such services are normally uncovered or made visible by controlled hand digging to minimize the potential of cutting or puncturing the service. However care should be taken during hand digging, as this can also result in cutting services, and exposing live conductors. Normally only when all the lines are

clearly visible should mechanical digging commence. Consideration may also be given to having a representative of the relevant utility company present when working close to underground services.

NO FLAMES

Gas is highly flammable, flame or any sources of ignition (sparks, static electricity, etc.) must not be allowed to come in contact with, or be in the vicinity of live gas.

WARNING SIGNS

Gas explosions, and contact with power lines can kill. People working close to, or accessing close to, or at live gas mains/power lines must be made aware of their existence, to allow them to apply the necessary controls. Suitable and sufficient Warning Signs should be erected to advise persons of the danger.

ASBESTOS CONTAINING MATERIAL

IDENTIFY/SURVEY

Prior to any work e.g. demolition, removal or maintenance work, which would expose or liable to expose a person to asbestos, it is vital to identify the location, condition the extent and types of asbestos present in advance of the works, so that all appropriate controls can be implemented.

The only way to verify whether asbestos or asbestos-containing materials are present or absent, is to have a suitable asbestos survey with laboratory analysis of representative samples, completed by a competent asbestos analyst/ consultant. There are two types of surveys that can be undertaken:

Management Survey
The standard asbestos survey. Its purpose is to locate as far as reasonably practicable the presence and extent of any suspect ACMs in the building which could be damaged or disturbed during normal occupancy, including foreseeable maintenance and installation. A management survey should assess the condition of the various ACMs and their ability to release fibres into the air if they are disturbed in some way. This is referred to as a material assessment. The survey will usually involve sampling and analysis to confirm presence of asbestos.
A sufficient number of samples should be taken to confirm the location and extent of ACMs. All areas should be assessed as far as is reasonably practicable.

Areas should include underfloor coverings, above false ceilings, inside risers, service ducts, lift shafts etc and may include some minor intrusive work. Any areas not accessed should be presumed to contain asbestos. Management surveys should cover routine and simple maintenance work. However, where 'more extensive' maintenance or repair work is involved, a localised **refurbishment** survey may be required.

Refurbishment and Demolition Surveys
A refurbishment and demolition survey is needed before any demolition or refurbishment work is carried out where the possibility exists that asbestos-containing materials may be present in a building due for demolition or major refurbishment. In line with legislation it is a requirement that all asbestos-containing materials be removed from a building or structure, as far as reasonably practicable, before such works commence. This type of survey is used to locate, describe and quantify, so far as is reasonably practicable, all asbestos-containing materials in the building or a specific location, and will usually involve destructive inspection so that all areas may be accessed, even those that may be difficult to reach. A full sampling programme must also be carried out so that all possible asbestos-containing materials in the building are identified, located and quantified. This information is necessary so that the appropriate removal techniques may be selected and implemented.

Each of the above survey types must be carried out in accordance with a recognised standard such as Asbestos: The Survey Guide (HSG 264): published by the UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

RISK ASSESS

Based on the identification of the hazards, a full documented Risk Assessment must be carried out which identifies all necessary control measures. The assessment must be communicated to the relevant persons who could be exposed to such risks.

PROCEDURE/TRAINING

Only trained competent persons to be allowed remove asbestos containing materials.
The method of removal of asbestos or asbestos-containing materials depends on the type of material being removed and the risk associated with the asbestos-containing materials. This information must be based on an adequate survey conducted by a competent person in accordance with a recognised standard (such as MDHS 100). It is essential that, depending on the nature of the materials present, adequate precautions are taken to ensure that personnel are not exposed to asbestos fibres during such activities. The general precautions to minimise exposure and control the spread of asbestos fibres are:

- Where possible remove the asbestos-containing materials intact.
- Keep the material dampened when working on it.
- Do not use power tools as they generate dust which could contain asbestos fibres.
- Remove waste and debris from the site as soon as possible to minimise the risk of it being crushed or broken.

DUST/WETTING

Wetting/damping down areas prevents dust from being dispersed into the air.

WASTE REMOVAL

Prior to the removal of any asbestos-containing materials, a suitable facility for waste disposal must be identified. Asbestos waste is a hazardous waste which must be disposed of properly.
In Ireland, asbestos cement waste can only be disposed of at a waste facility licensed by the Environmental Protection Agency. Asbestos cement waste can also be accepted at a hazardous waste transfer station licensed by the Environmental Protection Agency. Hazardous waste transfer stations accept asbestos waste and then arrange to have the waste disposed of at an appropriate facility either in Ireland or abroad. Asbestos cement waste must only be surrendered to local authority waste collectors or to a waste collection permit holder authorised under the relevant Waste Management (Collection Permit) Regulations to collect this type of waste. All asbestos-containing waste materials must be double bagged using high gauge polyethylene and be clearly labelled as asbestos waste. Contact the Environmental Protection Agency for further information on waste legislation and the disposal of asbestos-containing materials.

EXAMINATION & INSPECTION

A competent person is required to examine and inspect the effectiveness of the controls associated with removing any asbestos-containing materials. In circumstances where, based on risk assessment, air monitoring is required, this should be conducted by a competent person using specialised equipment It may be required for one or more of the following reasons:

a) to confirm that airborne concentrations of asbestos fibres are as low as reasonably practicable and that the correct choice of Respiratory Protective Equipment has been made;
b) to confirm that there has been no measurable spread of airborne fibres to areas adjacent to where work with asbestos cement has taken place;
c) to confirm that the work area has been adequately cleared of asbestos, so that where necessary a Clearance Certificate can be issued before normal work can be resumed.

BIOLOGICAL AGENTS

COVER CUTS

Exposure to micro-organisms such as bacteria or viruses through open cuts is one of the most common routes of infection for many common and serious diseases. It is essential therefore that all personnel properly cover all open cuts with waterproof bandages prior to commencing work. This requirement is in addition to the normal requirement to wear safety gloves and standard work clothes. Hands should be thoroughly washed prior to removing and replacing any bandages.

WASH HANDS

Washing hands is the thorough cleaning of one's hands. This is normally achieved using soap and running water. In remote short-term locations an alternative method is the use of biological hand wash solutions in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. It is critically important that all personnel understand the importance of thoroughly washing their hands prior to eating, drinking or smoking so as to avoid infecting themselves with any bacteria or viruses that their hands may have come in contact with during the course of their work.

VACCINATION PROGRAMME

A vaccination programme should be in place for all personnel exposed to Biological agents. It is not mandatory to avail of the inoculations but it is advisable.

EXCAVATION

SURVEY

Before work is to commence, the area should be scanned with a detector by a competent trained person to verify the position of any services. The position of services should be carefully marked to identify their location to personnel.

BACK FILL

Back filling is the re-instatement and making safe of the excavation. It must be carried out immediately after the support systems are removed. Stop blocks should be used to alert drivers of vehicles (dumpers, lorries, teleporters, etc.) when they are approaching the side of the excavation. If such vehicles come too close to the excavation, they could roll into it or undermine its bank.

EXCLUSION ZONE

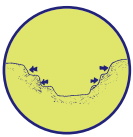
All persons – whether workers or members of the public – should be kept away from construction plant operations. People should not work within the working radius of an excavator boom. They should be kept at a safe distance from working plant. Barriers should be used where possible.

NO UNDERMINING

Before excavating, the adjacent area should be checked to ensure that the excavation work will not cause other structures to become unstable or collapse. Underpinning and propping may be required to stabilise such structures before excavation work begins.

Detailed risk assessments, taking account of the proximity of any anchoring, foundations, structural instability, etc., must be carried out. Resulting controls may include: getting detailed drawings from the utility company or Local Authority to include services; using props and supports; ensuring that working plant is kept away from the protected structure, etc.

BATTER BACK



'Battering back' means that the sides of the trench are sloped back to a safe angle. This makes the sides of the excavation stable and prevents collapse. Excavations and trenches can cause serious accidents in the event of one or both sides collapsing. This can result in burial or crushing of workers.

BARRIERS

Suitable barriers should be placed around excavations when work is in progress; typically, the barrier should be set and secured a safe distance from the crown (leading edge) of the excavation, e.g. 2 metres (decided on by a competent person). At the end of each day, these barriers should completely surround the excavation and be strong and high enough to prevent people falling into the excavation.

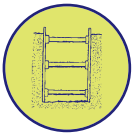
COVERS

Generally used in combination with barriers, covers (e.g. steel plates) should be placed over excavations. These should be appropriately secured and strong enough to prevent persons from falling through. These covers should identify what they are covering so that they are not inadvertently removed.

WARNING SIGNS

Warning signboards must be used across the site to alert workers or others when they are approaching high-risk areas (e.g. deep excavation). Signs must be placed at an appropriate location, and be as sufficiently clear and unambiguous as to make it possible for all workers and people to understand them. Signs should always be complied with. Members of the public approaching construction work must be given advance warning, particularly where specific hazards exist. **Refer to the Safety Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations.**

TRENCH SUPPORT



Shoring gives temporary support to the walls of a trench. Sheeting is placed along the walls of the trench; both vertical and horizontal props support the length of the excavation exposed. Several types of proprietary shoring systems are available, including hydraulic waling frames, manhole shores, slide-rail systems and trench/drag boxes. Traditional ground-support systems – timber boards supported by timber waling and struts or by steel trench sheeting, or sheet piling supported by timber or steel walings and struts – can also be used. Only a competent person who has completed a thorough risk assessment should choose the system to use.

EXAMINATION & INSPECTION

A competent person must inspect excavations before workers enter them and at least once a day after that. The support systems and ground conditions should be examined and any remedial work should take place immediately.
A report of the inspection should be recorded and subsequently stored.

GENERAL

ANIMAL DETERRENT TECHNIQUES

The behaviour of an animal is always unpredictable. It is advisable to check for the presence of an animal by communicating with property dwellers in advance or making your presence known, e.g. by rattling the gate. If you perceive the situation unsafe do not put yourself at risk. Animal deterrent devices could be used where appropriate.

If confronted by an animal

Stand your ground
Never run
Walk away slowly with head and eyes down
Never stare at the animal
Do Not turn your back

GAS/FLAME ARRESTER

Gas bottles must always be stored upright, and chained to prevent falling. Flash-back arresters must be used on gas bottles. All flexible hosing and connections should be checked daily and any damaged parts replaced prior to use.

GAS BOTTLE STORAGE

Gas bottles must always be stored upright and chained to prevent inadvertent falling.

PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICE

Anyone working close to or over water should wear personal flotation devices such as an inflatable life jacket. Such devices should be properly stored, inspected and serviced.

BURNERS/BOILERS/TRAINING/SERVICING

Coatings and materials such as bitumen and macadam must be heated or boiled before application. Care must be taken to avoid breathing in the fumes released during the working of hot bitumen and macadam. Prolonged exposure to these fumes may damage health. Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) for Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) and the coating materials (e.g. bitumen etc.) should be available. Handling and storage precautions outlined in these SDSs must be adhered to. Workers should be provided with coveralls, protective gauntlets and goggles to protect their clothing, skin and eyes from splatter. Boots worn should be resistant to bitumen penetration.

Measures must be put in place to ensure that all people, vehicles and property in the vicinity of the work activity are kept a safe distance from this work.

LIGHTING

Adequate lighting must be provided in darkened areas to prevent people from falling, slipping, tripping or being hit by projecting objects.

HOUSEKEEPING

All slip, trip and fall hazards must be removed. A good housekeeping system must be adopted so that everything has a place and is in its place. Measures should include keeping access ways and passage ways clear of rubbish and materials; putting rubbish into designated bins; removing protruding nails in wood, storing materials safely; etc.

Excessive amounts of dust can cause eye and respiratory irritation. Dust and muck present a nuisance to both workers and others in the vicinity.

SAFE STORAGE

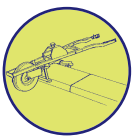
All materials should be stored where they cannot fall on to workers below. Materials should be kept tidy and stable making sure that all access routes are kept clear. Working platforms should not be cluttered or blocked with materials, there must always be adequate space for safe access. All loose materials should be removed on an ongoing basis.

MANUAL HANDLING

RISK ASSESSMENT

Each activity on site needs to be risk assessed, using the risk factors detailed in Schedule 3 of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007, to identify whether there is a manual handling hazard. If there is an identified risk of injury then appropriate controls must be put in place to eliminate the risk. If the hazard cannot be eliminated then the risk must be reduced to as low as possible.

MECHANICAL AIDS



Mechanical Aids are devices used to lift, pull or push objects, which either eliminate the need to manually handle the object or reduce the manual handling required.

WORK ORGANISATION

Work organisation, requires that the physical work method be assessed to see whether the work can be organised in such a way as to minimize or eliminate the need for manual handling.

TRAINING

Manual handling training is a legal requirement when deemed necessary through risk assessment. This training involves learning how to move loads in a manner, which will not injure the person.

CONFINED SPACE

RISK ASSESS

Based on the identification of the hazards, a full Risk Assessment must be carried out in writing with all the necessary controls identified and be communicated to the relevant persons who could be exposed to such risks.

SURVEY

Prior to entering a confined space to carry out a work activity, a full survery of the work area must be carried out in advance to identify all the hazards that may exist within, particularly the presence of harmful gases.

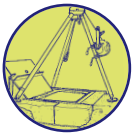
PERMIT TO WORK

This system ensures that a safe system of work is in place. It is generally used for activities with high levels of risk. Only authorised people can enter the work area, under controlled conditions.

DETECTION

Where harmful gases are likely to exist, gas detectors must be used to give an alert if a harmful level is approached.

TRIPOD



A tripod is a standard piece of rescue equipment for people working in confined spaces. With a tripod, the person can be lowered into the confined space by a 'buddy and, more importantly be raised out of it.

COMMUNICATION

Anyone inside the confined space must at all times be in verbal contact with those outside. It is crucial that the equipment used to communicate is spark free, to prevent it from providing a source of ignition.

SUBSTANCES

STORAGE/LABELS

Dangerous substances are used on a daily basis in maintenance work and come in many forms (e.g. fuels, weedkillers etc.). Some of these substances are more toxic than others, but all of them, if mishandled, consumed or crossed into the body will cause harm, serious illness or worse.
Safety information is contained on the label of dangerous substances. It is important to read the label. If you cannot understand the language used, ensure that the relevant safety information is fully explained to you.

When transferring chemicals from one container to another, it is very important to ensure that both containers are labelled correctly, stating what is in it. This ensures that the next person that picks up the container is fully aware of what it contains.
Dangerous substances should not be left unlabelled, lying around or exposed, but must be secured correctly in appropriately labelled, approved containers and immediately stored in controlled storage lock ups, in accordance with manufacturer's instructions (storage information on the Safety Data Sheet (SDS).
Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment must be worn when handling dangerous substances.

SAFETY DATA SHEET

A Safety Data Sheet (SDS) must be made available by the manufacturer/supplier of a dangerous substance or preparation to any professional user. The SDS contains prescribed and detailed information relating to a chemical product in an internationally recognised and uniform layout. It must list the following properties of the particular substance: identification of the substance; composition/ingredients; physical/chemical properties; stability and reactivity; first-aid measures; spillage measures; fire-fighting measures; exposure controls/PPE; storage and handling; ecological information; toxicological information; transport information; disposal considerations and supply and labelling information.
All persons using or handling a dangerous substance must be familiar with and aware of the relevant contents of its SDS.

HAND WASH

Hand hygiene (includes hand washing and use of antibacterial hand wipes, cleansing gels) is a vital control in reducing the risk of infection, ingestion and cross contamination, especially after handling or using any chemical product.
Use of substances such as degreasers, thinners, etc. can cause skin disorders.
Generally, appropriate gloves must be worn.

NO EATING

Work activity may involve possible exposure to chemical, bacterial and viral risks (e.g. spray-painting, work with contaminated ground, working close to sewers/culverts and drains etc.). Persons involved in such activities should only eat, drink or smoke after thoroughly cleaning their hands and must not eat food whilst working as infection can very easily pass from the hands to food whilst eating.

VENTILATION

Supplies fresh dust free air into the work area.

SMOKING CONTROL

Smoking is prohibited in enclosed workplaces.

PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)

Personal Protective Equipment protects individuals from harm when all other methods employed to eliminate risk have failed to do so completely. PPE is a last resort. PPE acts as a barrier between individuals and potentially hazardous chemicals, machines, tools and processes. To be effective, PPE must be carefully selected to protect against the particular hazards. When workers use the right PPE – and use it properly – they greatly reduce the risk of job related injury and illness. PPE should be correctly stored and maintained at all times in good working order. The PPE listed below must conform to the relevant Irish Standard.

SAFETY HELMET

Safety helmets/hard hats are used to protect the head from falling objects and to prevent the head from striking off objects. They should be replaced periodically.

Workers using safety harnesses should wear a helmet with a secure chin strap to keep it on the head in the event of a fall.

SAFETY BOOTS

Safety boots are required on all building sites. They should have steel toecaps and sole protection to prevent the toes from being crushed and any object from penetrating the sole.

EYE PROTECTION

Eye protection in the form of glasses/goggles or visors protects the eyes from flying objects, dust and splashes (e.g. when grinding and cutting etc.).

SAFETY GLOVES

Safety gloves protect the hands from cuts and from contact with harmful substances and sharp objects, etc.

EAR PROTECTION

Ear protectors help to protect hearing from loud sudden noise or from continuous loud noise. There are two action levels. Where noise exposure is at or exceeds 80 dBA, individual hearing protectors must be made available. Where noise exposure is at or exceeds 85 dBA, individual hearing protectors must be made available and must be used. There is also a limit value set at 87 dBA which must not be exceeded. The limit value takes account of the attenuation provided by hearing protectors worn by the worker. The action values do not take account of the effect of such protectors. Where risk assessment reveals that noise exposure is a risk to the worker's health, audiometric testing (hearing check) will have to be made available. In dirty and dusty environments, earmuffs are the recommended form of ear protection.

HI-VISIBILITY VEST

Hi-visibility vests help to ensure that a worker can be seen by drivers and operators of plant and other vehicles.

KNEE PADS

Workers who have to kneel frequently while working may require knee pads to prevent damage/injury to their knees.

RESPIRATORY EQUIPMENT

Respiratory equipment protects workers by filtering out harmful substances from the air breathed in. To work effectively, they must be well fitted and well maintained.

FACE PROTECTION

Face-protection visors protect the face from flying objects, sparks and splashes from hot or harmful substances.

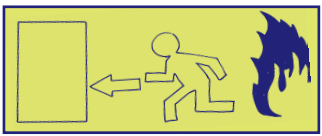
SAFETY HARNESS

Safety harnesses with a fall-arrest system (including other parts such as lanyard, shock absorber, and suitable anchors) prevent people from hitting the ground if they fall from a height. Fall-arrest systems should be used in conjunction with a **rescue plan**. Safety harnesses and personal fall-arrest equipment are not a substitute for safe working platforms or collective protection such as safety nets.

SAFETY OVERALLS

Safety overalls protect the body from coming into contact with harmful substances.

EMERGENCY ROUTE



To prevent injury from fire, all employees must be instructed what to do in the event of a fire, what the approved escape route is, and where the assembly points are located. Fire drills should be held regularly.

Fire Extinguishers
People need to be trained how to operate fire extinguishers. They should only be used for small fires.

Water Extinguishers
Water fire extinguishers are used only to put out fires involving cloth, paper and wood.

Foam Extinguishers
Foam extinguishers are suitable for most fires involving flammable liquids.

Carbon-Dioxide Extinguishers
Carbon-dioxide extinguishers may be used on fires involving flammable liquids or electrical apparatus.

Dry-Powder Extinguishers
Dry-powder extinguishers may be used on most fires including electrical fires.

ABBREVIATIONS

CCTV	Closed-circuit television
CE	Refers to European Community. Is marked on products and machines which comply with essential safety requirements of any relevant standards which are set down by the CEN, a European standard-setting body.
CSCS	Construction Skills Certification Scheme
ESB	Electricity Supply Board
ETCI	Electro-Technical Council of Ireland
MEWP	Mobile Elevating Work Platform
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
RPE	Respiratory Protection Equipment
RSJ	Rolled Steel Joist
SDS	Safety Data Sheet
SWL	Safe Working Load: the maximum load which an item of lifting equipment may raise, lower or suspend under the particular service conditions.

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