

Learn



Issued by: Fletcher Building Executive

Subject: Crane Failures

Key Learning: Hooks should be treated as a suspended load with exclusion zones, in case of equipment failure, to ensure the safety of those working nearby.



For Discussion: Please review the crane operations on your site and identify any new ways of working or changes required to treat hooks as suspended loads with exclusion zones. Notify your manager if you cannot treat hooks as suspended load.

What happened:

Vanuatu 09 July 2025.

Max, a dogman, was working underneath the hook during site set up at a wharf construction. He was fatally injured when he was struck by the ball hook after the anti-two block and the pedal breaking mechanism failed. There was no suspended load.



New Zealand 26 September 2025. During an apartment construction using a mobile crane, the anti-two block steel component broke into two pieces and fell when the system made contact at speed due to a failure in speed control. No one was injured. The component fell approx. 3-5 m from the rigger inside the exclusion zone.

Australia on 08 June 2026. The lifting mechanism on a monorail crane failed during a routine lift in Iplex AU. The dropped load narrowly missed the operator who was immediately adjacent to the load. The crane had recently been inspected and certified.



New Zealand on 11 June 2026. The fly jib attachment on a Hiab truck failed while retracting the lifting arm after a load had been completed. The attachment fell onto the truck; the operator was within 5m from the crane and was not injured.

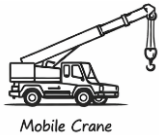
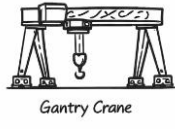
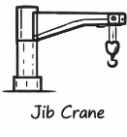
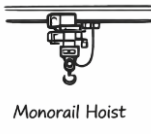
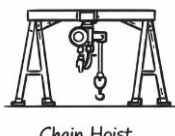
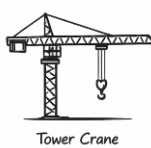
We believe all injuries are preventable. This is what we learned:



- **Cranes can fail** even when they are not carrying a load, and when they are inspected and certified. When they fail, hooks or components that fall from height can cause serious or fatal injuries.
- **Exclusion zones** can save the lives of riggers, dogmen and all workers under hooks that are suspended.
- **We must “treat suspended hooks as loads” – ensure that they are not lifted over people and are placed in a safe location when not in use.**

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Crane type	Technical set up	Recommendation treatment for hook as suspended load
Mobile crane (hydraulic or lattice boom)  Mobile Crane	Hook block on wire rope hoist line, reeved through sheaves; rope anchored to drum; anti-two block devices on boom tip	Always treat hook and block as a suspended load whenever off the ground, with or without a load. Exclusion zones apply.
Truck loader crane (Hiab/knuckle boom)  Truck Loader Crane	Hook or hook block on short wire rope or directly on articulated boom via swivel; often with winch or fixed hook	Treat hook as a suspended load whenever the boom is articulated or extended and hook is not landed. Control swing and drop zone.
Gantry crane (portal, semi-portal)  Gantry Crane	Hook block on wire rope or chain hoist on trolley across gantry beam	Hook is a suspended load whenever elevated and must not be slewed over people. When not in use, the hook must not be stored over active work areas.
Jib crane (pillar or wall-mounted)  Jib Crane	Hook on wire rope or chain hoist suspended from trolley on jib beam	Treat hook as suspended load whenever hoist is raised and jib is free to slew.
Monorail hoist  Monorail Hoist	Hook on chain or wire rope hoist running along fixed monorail beam	Hook is a suspended load whenever off the ground; control the travel path below.
Chain hoist (workshop)  Chain Hoist	Hook on load chain from hoist body fixed to structure	Treat hook as suspended load whenever chain is under tension and hook is above head height.
Davit/small swing hoist  Davit Crane	Hook on rope or chain from small jib or davit arm without a locking pin	Treat as suspended load whenever arm is swung out and hook is not landed.
Tower Crane  Tower Crane	Hook block on trolley hoist rope system, reeved through tower jib sheaves	Hook and block are suspended loads whenever raised. No access beneath hook path.