

TT029 – Working Around Mobile Plant

January 2025

There are many forms of mobile plant on site – often small, agile and “appearing out of nowhere.” Safe use of mobile plant requires planning and awareness.

Mobile Plant & Equipment on Site:

There is generally a wide variety of mobile plant and equipment on or near residential work sites. These create hazards for drivers, workers and the public if not well managed. Allocating parking, traffic areas and planning for the use of mobile plant on site assists in managing the risks associated with traffic movement.

Planning Mobile Plant Operations:

Awareness of Pedestrians: There are regularly other workers, visitors and general pedestrian traffic in and near mobile plant operational areas. These people may be unaware of operating mobile plant or the parameters of travel of the machine.

Safe Work Planning: While planning the work of the mobile plant *consider which controls you can use to avoid injury or incident.*

- Firstly, consider whether the hazard can be **eliminated** i.e. can the task be carried out without the use of mobile plant or at a time when other personnel are not present?
- Then consider what steps can be taken to **minimise** the risk of injury or incident. Effective minimization controls can include:

Spotter - delegate a person who is focused on ensuring a clear path at all times for the machine, monitoring hazards on behalf of the operator and stopping the operator or other traffic to avoid injury or incident.

Exclusion Zones – establish exclusion zones around the mobile plant operating area using barricade fencing, safety fencing, cone barriers, cones and hazard tape or signage. These reduce the risk of persons or other traffic entering the operating area.



TT029 – Working Around Mobile Plant

January 2025

Operator Competence:

It is important to note: the operator **MUST** be competent to operate the machine designated for the task. Competence is a combination of training, skills and experience and must be established in the Contractors training and competence register. Operators must also be authorised and licensed (where applicable).

Fit For Purpose Plant:

The machine **MUST** be in good repair, suitable for the task and have all safety features working properly before the task commences. A pre-operational inspection should be completed before work commences daily.



Cones or barriers should be used to establish an exclusion zone around mobile plant and equipment.

GOLDEN RULES:

- 1. NEVER** operate plant or equipment unless you're trained and authorised.
- 2. ALWAYS** stay clear of exclusion zones.

Other Considerations:

WorkSafe NZ has published a Fact Sheet called *"Keeping Safe around Moving Plant"* which highlights the following additional controls:

- ✓ Operators must maintain situational awareness of their surroundings at all times.
- ✓ Establish and observe speed limits on site.
- ✓ Use audible reversing alarms and / or flashing lights.
- ✓ Plan drive-through and turning areas to minimise the need for reversing.
- ✓ Locate loading areas close to storage areas.

Review the Control Measures:

As with any controls implemented to manage a hazard they must be reviewed regularly, consider:

- ✓ Are the controls effective?
- ✓ Are the controls being implemented?
- ✓ What is going to change on site that could affect the existing controls?

TT029 – Working Around Mobile Plant

January 2025

Discussion Points and Q&A

Q. Name two controls that can be applied to keep pedestrians separate from mobile plant operations?

A. Exclusion zones and spotters.

Q. How can an exclusion zone be established around a mobile plant operating area?

A. By using barricade fencing, safety fencing, cone barriers or cones and hazard tape.

Q. Name two Golden Rules that must be observed in relation to mobile plant?

A. “Always stay clear of exclusion zones” and “Never operate plant unless you’re trained and authorised”.

Q. What are the three conditions that must- be-met to ensure plant is “fit for purpose”?

A. It must be in good repair, be suitable for the task and have all of its safety features in working order.

