

Guidance for where a Thorough Examination cannot be carried out on a MEWP, MCWP or Construction Hoist due to COVID-19



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Introduction

Due to the unprecedented situation with COVID-19 there are many machines that now have an out of date thorough examination inspection record or may be due one within an unachievable timeframe.

After much consultation with IPAF and the wider industry, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has accepted that there may be situations that, as a direct result of COVID-19, it may not be possible for a Thorough Examination and Test (TE&T) to be conducted within the prescribed period and that the equipment may still need to be used.

This document is intended to provide guidance for the user of MEWPs/MCWPs and Construction Hoists in these situations and should be used in conjunction with the advice from the HSE [available here](#).

If a machine has fallen outside of its time limit for TE&T and it is not possible for the machine to be inspected by a competent person, the machine owner should contact the machine user to discuss steps to inspect the machine and document the results. The user could assign the machine operator to conduct a thorough pre-use inspection based on a Thorough Examination check sheet and decide if the machine is suitable and safe for continued use.

This pre-use inspection must be well documented and show which checks have taken place, by whom and when this occurred. Any faults or concerns must be document and acted upon appropriately. Machinery should not be operated without ensuring that it is safe and in good working order.

There are likely to be three outcomes of a fault.

1. The fault could cause the equipment to be unsafe:
 - a. Isolate the equipment
 - b. Tag the equipment to inform as unsafe
 - c. Report the fault to the owner
2. The fault will not cause physical danger (e.g. partially damaged decal, small amount of corrosion on a pin):
 - a. Detail this in the report and include photographs where possible
 - b. Report the defect to the owner
3. The person conducting the inspection is unsure whether the fault will cause the equipment to be unsafe:
 - a. Isolate and quarantine the equipment
 - b. Tag the equipment to inform others not to use
 - c. Document the fault
 - d. Photograph the fault
 - e. Get advice from the machine owner to determine the ongoing safety of the machine

It is understood that an operator or user conducting the following tests may not have all the necessary tools or knowledge to conduct some of the tests or verification. Those that cannot be completed should be highlighted and machine owner contacted for assistance.

IPAF has produced a pre-inspection checklist which can be downloaded [here](#). For further information on the inspection, maintenance and thorough examination of MEWPs download the SFPSG guidance [here](#).



If the machine to be used has been out of use (dormant) for over two weeks, additional focus should be made of the following during the pre-use inspection:

Inspection point
Review the previous inspection report for areas of deterioration
Fuel tank for water contamination due to condensation
Flat or low batteries
Air filter and exhaust systems for birds' nests and insects
Corroded controls causing levers or switches to stick in any direction
Brakes for corrosion, sticking on and effectiveness
Chains or wire ropes for corrosion and cleanliness
Tyres for flat spots and any cracking of rubber
Steering linkages and rams for sticking and corrosion
Hydraulic rams for corrosion and leaks
Wear pads on booms, outriggers etc. for debris and dirt
Under the machine for any liquids that have leaked from the machine
If possible, conduct a simulated machine overload test in line with manufacturer's instructions

Further details can be obtained from [Guidance for Enhanced Pre-operational Checks on Plant Following Post COVID-19 Site Lockdowns](#) available from CPA.

If there is any doubt that a machine is safe to use, do not use it.

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