

THE PEDESTRIAN CONTROL OF MEWPS TOOLBOX TALK

WHAT IS "THE PEDESTRIAN CONTROL OF MEWPS"?

Mobile Elevating Work Platforms (MEWPs) are provided with ground and platform controls to comply with global MEWP design standards. Pedestrian control is the term used when the MEWP operator uses the platform controls from the ground by walking alongside, or in close proximity to the MEWP. This includes those that have an umbilical cord, or radio/remote, or a fixed point of control on the chassis.

WHEN WOULD YOU USE THE PEDESTRIAN CONTROLS?

Pedestrian controls are normally used where there is insufficient or restricted space above the platform to stand in and manoeuvre the machine safely, an example of this would be going through a low doorway, corridor or when the platform guardrails have been folded down or removed. Some tracked type MEWPs forbid travelling in the MEWP platform, so this type of equipment must be driven in pedestrian mode. Information on this procedure can be found in the manufacturer's operators manual.

WHAT ARE THE HAZARDS WHEN USING THE PEDESTRIAN CONTROLS?

- The MEWP wheels or tracks running over the operator's foot while manoeuvring.
- Insufficient length of control box lead.
- Crushing against an object by selecting the incorrect drive or steer direction.
- Crushing the operator between the MEWP and an external structure e.g., a door frame.
- Collision with bystanders.
- Collision with structures owing to poor visibility.
- Overturning the MEWP e.g., driving off a kerb or when loading or unloading the MEWP on a vehicle.

WHO NEEDS TO KNOW?

This Toolbox Talk applies to all individuals involved with the safe operation of a MEWP, including:

- User (who has control of the use of the MEWP on site)
- Managers and Supervisors
- Operators
- Banksman

RISK CONTROL METHODS

- Carry out a job specific risk assessment.
- The operator should be trained and familiarised with the MEWP they are operating.
- Compare the directional arrows on the chassis and drive controller to confirm the orientation of the machine chassis and the controller match to ensure MEWP travel and steer will be in the anticipated direction when the drive controller is moved.
- Maximise your stand-off distance.
- Select slow speed drive (if fitted).
- Walk the route before moving the MEWP. Remove any obstacles or debris from your planned route.
- Do not get distracted, focus on what you are doing.
- If visibility is obstructed use a banksman to help guide the machine.
- Avoid slippery surfaces.
- Allow enough space when stopping the MEWP.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR DRIVING THE MEWP USING THE PEDESTRIAN CONTROLS:

- Some MEWPs are fitted with multiple connection points for the platform control box, this allows the operator to plug in to an additional connection point at the chassis and will increase the stand-off distance. Always refer to the manufacturer's operators manual for this information.
- When manoeuvring the MEWP and there is adequate space around you, where possible stand to the side of the machine with the platform control box in your hands correctly orientated to the machine direction.
- If you intend to travel in a restricted space e.g., through a doorway or under a low ceiling, if possible stand behind the MEWP at a safe distance in the direction of travel, with the platform control box in your hands correctly orientated to the machine direction to reduce the risk.

USEFUL REFERENCES

- IPAF Operators Safety Guide (available on the ePAL app www.ipaf.org/ePAL)
- IPAF Load Unload Guidance (available via www.ipaf.org/resources)
- Manufacturer's Operators Manual (available via www.ipaf.org/manufacturers)
- Andy Access Poster (available via www.ipaf.org/andyaccess)