

Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1988 (LOLER)

The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1988 (LOLER) deal with the specific risks arising from the use of lifting equipment (including lifting accessories).

They build upon the Provision and Use of Working Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) in many areas, and apply to all lifting operations, equipment and accessories.

LOLER defines a lifting operation as "an operation concerned with the lifting or lowering of a load". A 'load' is the item, or items being lifted, which includes a person or people.

'Lifting equipment' means work equipment for lifting and lowering loads. This includes lifting accessories and attachments used for anchoring, fixing or supporting the equipment.



Essential points to consider – planning of lifting operations

- The siting, setting up and use of equipment for lifting operations requires careful planning to ensure the safety of all involved, and others who could be affected.
- All lifting operations must be carried out by, and under the control of, trained and competent persons who have been properly briefed on the lifting plan.
- One person with sufficient training, practical and theoretical knowledge and experience should be appointed to be responsible for planning and supervising the tasks – known as the competent person in LOLER, or the appointed person in BS 7121 *Code of Practice for the safe use of cranes*.
- The competent person (lift planner) must identify the hazards, evaluate the risks and work out the control measures required to carry out the task safely: these components should be developed into a coherent lifting plan.
- The lifting plan should be recorded with a method statement, including any contingency measures and rescue procedures.
- The contents of the plan should be communicated effectively to and between all parties involved, taking language differences into account.
- Arrangements should be made to ensure that copies of any method statements are given to the appropriate people, and that others involved or affected by the operation are fully briefed. Similarly, any changes to the plan should be communicated to all parties.
- Immediately before a job starts, the risk assessment and method statement (lift plan) should be reviewed to check if any aspects of the operation or working environment have changed, and assess the effect that these changes could have on the safety of the people involved.
- Where changes are identified, the competent person (lift planner) should amend the lift plan and sign any significant changes with their initials. If any modifications to the plan are required, these should be communicated to all involved.

Essential points to consider – lifting equipment

- Lifting equipment is any work equipment (such as mobile or static cranes, hoists, telehandlers and excavators) used for lifting or lowering loads (including people), and includes the attachments used for anchoring, fixing or supporting them (such as tie bars used for securing cranes to the cores of high-rise buildings).
- Lifting equipment includes any lifting accessories that attach the load to the equipment, in addition to the equipment that carries out the actual lifting function.
- LOLER requires that lifting equipment must be of adequate strength and stability.
- Lifting equipment should only be operated by people who have been trained and assessed as competent.
- Lifting equipment should be positioned or installed in such a way as to reduce the risk – as far as reasonably practicable – of the equipment or load striking a person, or of the load drifting, falling freely or being unintentionally released.
- Detailed attention must be given to site features (such as overhead cables, unstable ground conditions and adjacent properties).
- All lifting equipment, including accessories, must be clearly marked to indicate their safe working loads (SWLs) – the maximum load that the equipment can safely lift.
- Where equipment is to be used to lift people, it should be marked to indicate the number of people that can be lifted in addition to the SWL of the equipment.
- Lifting equipment that is not designed for lifting people, but which might be used this way in error, must be clearly marked to indicate that it should not be used to lift people.

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- The rated capacity (safe working load, or SWL) of any item of lifting equipment or lifting accessory must never be exceeded.
- All lifting equipment and lifting accessories must be adequately maintained.
- All lifting equipment and lifting accessories must be subjected to a schedule of inspections and thorough examination.

Further information

- L113 *Safe use of lifting equipment: Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 Approved Code of Practice and guidance* (free Health and Safety Executive (HSE) publication).
- L22 *Safe use of work equipment: Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 Approved Code of Practice and guidance* (free HSE publication).

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