

Information Item	The simple agreement that can prevent catastrophes
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The simple agreement that can prevent catastrophes

*The Crane Association of New Zealand's Past President, Scott McLeod, discusses why clash agreements are paramount to avoiding catastrophe in this month's **The Technical Corner**.*

Not having the right mechanisms in place to safeguard against catastrophic collisions is like playing Russian roulette.

"And hopefully the bullet isn't in the chamber as you slew around to the right."

So says Managing Director of McLeod Cranes and Crane Association NZ Past President, Scott McLeod, who recommends all crane companies utilise a clash prevention agreement.

Many will understand that operating a crane near structures or in confined areas can create a potentially dangerous situation if the hazards are not appropriately controlled.

But as both cranes become larger and jobs become more complex, Scott says the agreement is increasingly paramount for site safety.

"So, it never hurts to remind the industry of the tools we can use to eliminate as many risks as possible in order to successfully complete the job without incidents."

While informal practices to ensure collisions don't occur have been around as long as the crane, he says, the agreement is an efficient means to get everyone on the same page.

A McLeod Cranes clash prevention agreement, for example, has a myriad of operational requirements to adhere to.

From reliable and constant radio communication between operators to ensuring a crane operator doesn't leave the crane under any circumstances when a load is on the hook; the list may comprise common sense stipulations.

But Scott says eliminating the smallest points of failure goes a long way to setting up the success of the site, and the safety of the companies involved.

And in an example where a site comprises two cranes, the two Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking will need to agree on a methodology for ensuring that they don't come into contact with each other.

"So, they utilise a clash agreement as a control mechanism to strike an agreement on how they're going to avoid each other," Scott says.

“It might be that they designate areas where neither party will enter, and make agreements around working areas that the other party will work in.”

Again, Scott refers to some of the industry’s most important words; consultation, cooperation and coordination.

“The three C’s are all about overlapping duties, to ensure the safety of the site. And the agreement is a mechanism to agree the playing field

“Once you’ve agreed to that playing field, there are other tools that you might use. Modern cranes allow no-go zones to be programmed into the safe load indicator.”

Another layer of precaution is enforcing a spotter to enforce the clash agreement.

“There are multiple worst-case scenarios in our industry. Thankfully, we’re pretty diligent about how we operate.”

Scott McLeod

McLeod Cranes

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