

# Lifting Equipment

The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) aim to reduce risks to people's health and safety from lifting equipment provided for use at work. In addition to the requirements of LOLER, lifting equipment is also subject to the requirements of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER), see Further information.

## What does LOLER do?

Generally, the Regulations require that lifting equipment provided for use at work is:

- strong and stable enough for the particular use and marked to indicate safe working loads;
- positioned and installed to minimise any risks;
- used safely, ie the work is planned, organised and performed by competent people; and
- subject to ongoing thorough examination and, where appropriate, inspection by competent people.

## What equipment is covered by the Regulations?

Lifting equipment includes **any equipment used at work for lifting or lowering loads**, including attachments used for anchoring, fixing or supporting it. The Regulations cover a wide range of equipment including, cranes, fork-lift trucks, lifts, hoists, mobile elevating work platforms, and vehicle inspection platform hoists. The definition also includes lifting accessories such as chains, slings, eyebolts etc. LOLER **does not** apply to escalators, these are covered by more specific legislation, ie the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.

## Do the Regulations apply to me?

The Regs apply to employers or self-employed persons who provide lifting equipment for use at work, or have control of the use of lifting equipment. The Regs cover places where the HSW Act applies - these include factories, offshore installations, agricultural premises, offices, shops, hospitals, hotels, places of entertainment etc.

## What do the Regulations require?

Employers need to **ensure** that in using any lifting equipment the requirements of LOLER are met. For example, they should ensure that all lifting equipment is:

- sufficiently **strong, stable and suitable** for the proposed use. Similarly, the load and anything attached (eg timber pallets, lifting points) must be suitable;
- **positioned or installed to prevent the risk of injury**, eg from the equipment or the load failing or striking people;
- **visibly marked** with any appropriate information to be taken into account for its safe use, eg safe working loads. Accessories, eg slings, clamps etc, should be similarly marked.

Additionally, employers must **ensure** that:

- lifting operations are **planned, supervised** and carried out in a safe manner by people who are competent;
- where equipment is used for lifting people it is marked accordingly, and it should be **safe** for such a purpose, eg all necessary precautions have been taken to eliminate or reduce any risk;
- where appropriate, before lifting equipment (including accessories) is used for the first time, it is **thoroughly examined**. Lifting equipment may need to be thoroughly examined in use at periods specified in the Regulations (ie at least six-monthly for accessories and equipment used for lifting people and, at a minimum, annually for all other equipment) **or** at intervals laid down in **an examination scheme drawn up by a competent person**. All examination work should be performed by a competent person; and
- following a thorough examination or inspection of any lifting equipment, a **report** is submitted by the competent person to the employer to take the appropriate action.

## How do the Regulations relate to other health and safety legislation?

The requirements of the Regulations need to be considered alongside other health and safety law. For example, section 2 of the HSW Act requires all employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all their employees. Similarly, the Management Regs contain important duties which relate to the carrying out of a risk assessment to identify measures that employers can take to eliminate, or reduce, the risks presented by the particular hazards in your workplace.

## Action points

1. Ensure the your employer meets all the requirements of the Regs for lifting equipment
2. Use your safety reps rights to inspect your employers procedures.
3. Make sure you are consulted by your employer and involved in the arrangements for implementing the Regs.

## Further information

*Safe use of lifting equipment. Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998. Approved Code of Practice and Guidance L I 13 HSE Books 1998 ISBN 0 7176 1628 2*