Fatal 2 - Mobile Plant - Life changing injuries in telehandler incident – MPConnect Alert

WHAT HAPPENED

A 21-year-old employee suffered life-changing injuries at a waste and recycling company yard after being crushed against a brick wall by a reversing telehandler. He was hand-sorting waste alongside other workers when the telehandler reversed into him. He sustained **multiple fractures, internal organ injuries, nerve damage, partial hearing loss**, and **permanent sight loss in one eye.**

KEY FINDINGS

Key findings from the HSE investigation:

- **No suitable and sufficient risk assessment** had been completed for vehicle–pedestrian interactions within the yard.
- **No segregation** between pedestrians and mobile equipment; workers routinely operated on foot in the same areas as vehicles.
- The telehandler had **missing reversing mirrors**, significantly compromising rear visibility.
- The company failed to implement **physical protection or designated pedestrian routes**, placing employees at consistent risk.

The company was fined for breaching the **Health and Safety at Work etc.**



LEARNING POINTS / ACTIONS TAKEN

HOW COULD THIS HAVE BEEN AVOIDED

- **Effective Traffic Management Plans,** segregate pedestrians and vehicles, and enforce one-way systems and designated equipment operating zones. Apply temporary exclusion zones with barriers when work activities require pedestrian access.
- **Operate documented maintenance schemes**, including **daily pre-use checks.** Rectify defects promptly, especially those affecting visibility.
- **Fit visibility aids where identified by risk assessment**, such as mirrors, cameras, sensors, reversing alarms.
- Ensure all operators are **trained, competent and authorised** and provide periodic refresher training.
- Consider mandating **high-visibility trousers and tops**, not just vests.
- Risk assess all tasks involving **vehicle and pedestrian interaction.**.
- **Establish safe zones** where workers can stand when vehicles are moving.

KEY REVIEW POINTS:

- Review **traffic plans**, ensuring physical segregation where feasible.
- Verify **all mobile equipment has the required visibility aids** and that defects are rectified immediately.
- Reinforce **operator competence** and authorisation procedures**.**
- Mandate **high-visibility PPE**
- Require **pre task risk assessments** for activities in operational yards.
- Audit compliance regularly, including **daily equipment prestart checks** and pedestrian route adherence.

For more details, refer to the HSE Press Release:: Recycling company fined after employee suffers life-changing injuries in telehandler incident – HSE Media Centre

LOCATION:	**RECYCLING PLANT**	**ALERT STATUS:**	**Normal**
ACTIVITY:	**MOBILE PLANT OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**	**DATE ISSUED:**	**17/03/2026 20:16:46**
SUB ACTIVITY:	**NO SUB ACTIVITY AVAILABLE**	**INCIDENT No:**	**04968**