

BEST PRACTICE

LOCATION:	Concrete products plant	ARTICLE YEAR	2016
ACTIVITY:	Production and Processing	COMPANY:	CEMEX UK Materials
SUB ACTIVITY:	Concrete products	COMPANY LOCATION:	Washwood Heath
BEST PRACTICE No:	BP1957	COMPANY TEL:	0000
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:	United Kingdom		

TITLE

Railway sleeper turning process

ARTICLE

DESCRIPTION

Cemex Rail Solutions at Washwood Heath manufactures concrete railway sleepers. Part of the operation includes a small production shop that also undertakes remedial repairs to sleepers.

Sleepers are upside down when they are removed from the mould. Previously, they were laid face down on the floor and would then be manually turned, using heavy bars as levers. The sleepers weigh over 400kg and are 2.5 metres in length. Last year, there was a minor accident when one of the turning bars flipped back and hit an operative.

All the operatives were consulted on how this process could be made more efficient and safer. The concept of a sleeper turner that would pick up the sleepers after they were removed from the mould and turn them safely was developed. The design could also handle sleepers that required repair.

The turner can be adjusted at one end to allow any length of sleeper to be handled and different inserts have been created to allow for different shaped sleepers to be turned. The turner is operated by either inserting a hand or power tool onto a mechanism which has a 40 to 1 turn ratio.

In addition, a conveyor has been installed at waist height. Repairs to sleepers are no longer carried out at ground level, avoiding the need for operatives to bend and stretch.

BENEFITS

- Reduction in manual handling
- Eliminating work at ground level
- More efficient operation
- Improved morale
- Improved product quality.

ARTICLE IMAGES

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Before

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