

SHARED LEARNINGS

A SAFETY INCIDENT HAS TAKEN PLACE



Stop the Job – Excavator Doors open whilst in operation.

Issued to:	All Colleagues and Service Providers
Date of Incident:	20 th April 2026
Location:	Richmond Park Crescent, S13 8HF
Classification:	Stop the Job
Contact:	Health, Safety and Training
Issue Date:	01 May 2026

OVERVIEW

Excavation works were recently stopped after a service provider was observed operating an excavator with the cab door open. The excavator cab doors form an integral part of the rollover protection system (ROPS) and operating the plant in this condition compromises operator safety. The closed cab door and the wearing of a seatbelt also ensure that, should the excavator become unstable, the operator remains within the excavator cab.

Since January 2025 there have been 14 reports via our safe site visits of excavators being used non compliantly with the cab doors open or seatbelts not worn.

In accordance with HSG 144 – The Safe Use of Vehicles on Construction Sites, selecting the right vehicle for the task is a fundamental element of effective vehicle management. Any vehicle chosen must be suitable for its intended use and capable of carrying out the assigned activities safely. When selecting vehicles, the following key factors should be considered:

- *safe access to and from the cab and other working locations on the vehicle.*
- *protection for the driver from work hazards, e.g. working at height and falling from the vehicle, falling objects and the effects of the vehicle overturning.*

DISCUSSION POINTS

Why cab doors must be closed

- **ROPS integrity.** On many excavators, cab doors form part of the Roll Over Protective Structure (ROPS). Operating with doors open compromises this protection.
- **Prevention of ejection.** Open doors increase the risk of the operator being partially or fully ejected during sudden movement or overturning.
- **Protection from hazards.** Closed doors protect against falling objects, contact with nearby plant or structures, and exposure to weather and dust.
- **Manufacturer's design.** Excavators are designed and tested to be operated with doors closed; operating otherwise is outside safe operating conditions.

Why seatbelts must be worn (where fitted)

- **Maintains the protected position.** Seatbelts keep the operator within the ROPS-protected zone during jolts or rollovers.
- **Reduces injury severity.** Significantly lowers the risk of head impact, crushing, or impact with controls or cab structures.
- **Essential to ROPS effectiveness.** ROPS protection is ineffective if the operator is not properly restrained.



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