

Learning Brief: #029

Date: 16/02/2026

Temporary Work Equipment – Responsibilities and Maintenance

This learning brief is shared in order to promote learning and improve safety. You should seek appropriate guidance regarding the relevance, accuracy, and completeness of this alert to your circumstances prior to implementation.

Theme

Plant - Assets - Plant & Equipment (Operations & Maintenance)

Summary of Issue

Use of specialised equipment for specific maintenance and refurbishment tasks. During a major plant shutdown contractors were using a dedicated brickling rig (arch & platform) to enable the installation of refractory bricks in a rotary kiln. Use of the brickling rig was an infrequent occurrence (two or three times per year) and when not in use the equipment was stored in a transport container. The brickling rig was of unknown age and owned by the company but used almost exclusively by the same contractor that specialised in refractory repairs.

The 300kg (estimated) arch failed during the activity and toppled, striking and trapping a contractor's employee who suffered a double fracture to their lower leg. The brickling rig did not have a formalised maintenance record and was not included in any asset management or maintenance register.



Toppled Frame inside Rotary Kiln

The contractors had successfully completed numerous refractory repairs at the site previously and had developed a robust Risk Assessment / Method Statement (RAMS) to ensure that the brickling rig was

inspected on removal from storage and at the start of each shift during use. The contractor was relied upon to immediately report any equipment defects to site management and not continue with the work until suitable repairs had been made or alternative equipment found.

The RAMS for the work was not followed by the contractor. No pre-use inspection of the bricklaying rig was carried out, and although damage and missing clamps causing instability of the rig were noted prior to the incident, a decision was taken to continue the work without fixing the defects.



Runner – positioned between footplate and track.

Securing clamps not available.

Learning

Although the equipment and incident description above are specific to kiln re-lining, the root causes and generic lessons are applicable much more widely and represent valuable learning points both on Asset Management and Management of Contractors, for all operations.

- Every business should operate an asset management process that includes a comprehensive asset management register. Each asset should have an asset maintenance record, which is a part of the asset management process.
- All assets should be clearly marked with a reference from the asset management register and identify the business name of the asset owner.
- The asset management process should include recorded affixing of an appropriate asset label to all assets prior to first use.
- The asset maintenance process should include recorded inspection and maintenance of the identified asset/equipment.
- The asset maintenance process should include recorded, periodic inspection and maintenance of all assets in long term storage between uses at appropriate intervals determined by a risk assessment.
- The risk assessment and method statement for the work should include the list of assets that are to be used, with their references and ownership details, and a recorded, reportable step to require that the asset maintenance record for each asset is reviewed prior to use.
- There should also be a recorded, reportable step that an asset should also be inspected prior to, during (at appropriate intervals or points in the work) and on completion of use, for the work involved.
- All contract documents should include a list of assets that are to be used in the contract works, and the asset management register reference and asset owner for each asset should be included in the list.
- Contractors should be required within the contract documents to also operate robust asset management and maintenance processes for their assets brought to the project for use within the contracted work.

The Process Safety Forum has been set up to provide an industry association platform whereby initiatives, best practice, lessons from incidents and process safety strategy can be distilled and shared across sectors, to influence our stakeholders (including the Regulators), and to drive the process safety management agenda. The Process Safety Forum consists of representatives from across industry, refer to the website for details

The website is www.p-s-f.org.uk.