

When Do You Need a Lift Plan?

Decision flowchart – LOLER 1998 Reg. 8 and BS 7121-1:2016 lift categorisation

START HERE — THE RULE THAT CATCHES EVERYONE

LOLER Reg. 8 requires EVERY lifting operation to be planned by a competent person. The question is never whether to plan — only how.

Is lifting equipment being used to lift or lower a load?

Crane · telehandler · lorry loader (HIAB) · excavator lifting · gantry · hoist · MEWP carrying a load

NO

LOLER Reg. 8
does not apply

YES

Does ANY of the following apply?

One tick is enough — these are the BS 7121-1 complex-lift triggers.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Two or more cranes lifting one load (tandem lift) | ☐ Lifting people — man basket or personnel carrier |
| ☐ Load is close to the machine's rated capacity | ☐ Blind lift — operator cannot see the load or landing area |
| ☐ Lifting over a live road, railway, waterway or occupied building | ☐ Working near overhead power lines or live services |
| ☐ Load weight or centre of gravity is unknown or awkward | ☐ Ground conditions unproven, made ground, or near an excavation |
| ☐ Multiple machines with overlapping working radii | ☐ Lifting in exceptional wind, or outside the manufacturer's chart |

YES

NO

COMPLEX LIFT

Detailed, lift-specific written plan required, prepared by an Appointed Person with competence appropriate to the lift — commonly CPCS A61 Advanced.

Expect the principal contractor to want the plan, the rigging arrangement and the load chart working days in advance — not on the morning of the lift.

A generic plan is never sufficient.

Is the lift routine and repetitive?

Same machine, same load type, same conditions, already covered by a schedule of common lifts — e.g. repeat HIAB offloads to a set compound.

YES

NO

BASIC LIFT

A generic plan or schedule of common lifts may be used — but it must still be reviewed against the actual site first.

STANDARD LIFT

A site-specific written lift plan by an Appointed Person, briefed to the whole lifting team before work starts.

WHAT LOLER 1998 REGULATION 8 ACTUALLY REQUIRES

Every employer shall ensure that every lifting operation involving lifting equipment is properly planned by a competent person, appropriately supervised, and carried out in a safe manner.

Note the words: every lifting operation, and competent person. Neither is qualified by the size of the load or the value of the job.

THREE THINGS THAT GET PLANS REJECTED

1. Generic plan, never site-checked

A schedule of common lifts is not a lift plan until someone has stood on the actual ground and signed it off.

2. Load weight taken on trust

"About two tonne" is not a weight. Get it from the delivery note, the drawing or a calculation.

3. Capacity read at the wrong radius

Utilisation must be checked at the worst-case radius of the whole operation, with all deductions applied.

IN PRACTICE

Most principal contractors require a written, site-specific lift plan for every lift regardless of category. If in doubt, write the plan — a rejected plan costs a day, an unplanned lift costs a great deal more.

Need one written or checked? RMT Solutions — independent CPCS A61 Appointed Person, from £200, 24-48hr turnaround.