

ULTRA ACCESS

Workplace Situational Awareness

How to remain vigilant of the dangers of others working around you

Workplace Situational Awareness comprises three continuous, and recurring phases:

- **Perception** of hazards in the immediate in the environment.
- **Comprehension** of risks involved.
- **Likelihood** of them becoming a serious safety concern.

... very similar to when creating a Risk Assessment, which is all on-site / **Workplace Situational Awareness** really is... its a mental Risk Assessment, essentially.

Moving Plant is one of the main risks for operatives when moving around a construction project and as scaffolders, you might have to work in areas that are far beyond the beaten path of any traffic-pedestrian management systems.

No matter how well managed the particular project you are working on, there still has to be the "reasonably practicable" element employed, so you could have to work within close proximity to plant and the time old saying goes: **if you cannot see the face of the driver, directly, or in the mirrors, they cannot see you.** So get their attention before moving into "their area".

Deliberate eye contact with plant and mobile equipment operators is imperative.

Take the time and have the patience to wait, get their acknowledgement and only walk into their "area" when they have given you permission to do so.

This can be as subtle as the nod of the head - pay attention to this.

It's always handy to raise a hand (in thanks), as you would when crossing the road, after a vehicle driver has slowed and waved you on.



Now, overhead / lifting works are slightly different.

Cranes, etc usually have the operator situated way up in the sky, where eye contact and hand signals could be ineffective, so always adhere to the instructions of trained personnel like Slinger/Banksmen who would usually have direct contact with the operators in the air via radios or walkie talkies.

And scaffolding works could also pose a serious risk to others around and primarily below, when carried at height - so the same rules would apply, although other trades might not have the same level of **Workplace Situational Awareness** an experienced scaffold has...



Exclusion Zones should always be installed, and failing that - the scaffolding operatives on the ground should be ever-vigilant for others walking in to "their area", especially when using a Rope and Ginny Wheel.

When working at height, scaffolders have an immediate advantage of a much wider field of view, and this can help keep others safe in the workplace.

And when an unsuspecting contractor does come close to walking into "your area"...

A simple shout of STOP - to alert your work colleagues and these other contractors, hand raised - eye contact, with a quick scan of the area and a wave on could potentially save a life.