

SAFE USE OF MAN BASKETS (CRANE & FORK-MOUNTED TYPES)

Applies to: Eichinger, Conquip, and similar crane-suspended or forklift-mounted man cages and access platforms

Purpose

Man baskets (also known as access platforms or man cages) are designed to safely lift personnel using a crane or forklift where other safe means of access are not practicable.

They provide temporary elevated access for inspection, maintenance, or installation tasks.

This leaflet provides guidance for safe setup, operation, and maintenance to prevent falls, overturning, or dropped loads.

Before Use

- Inspect the basket – Check the floor, frame, welds, gates, harness anchor points, and lifting lugs or fork sleeves for cracks, deformation, or corrosion.
- Verify SWL (Safe Working Load) – Ensure the basket's capacity (persons + tools) does not exceed its rated limit.
- Check certification – Ensure the man basket, lifting equipment, and accessories have valid inspection and test certificates.
- Confirm suitability – Only use the correct basket type (crane-suspended or fork-mounted) for the lifting equipment being used.
- Check forklift or crane capacity – The equipment's SWL must exceed the combined weight of the basket, occupants, and tools.
- Ensure restraint points – Confirm that internal anchor points for safety harnesses are present and undamaged.
- Inspect safety features – Verify locking gates, handrails, toe boards, and latches are secure and functional.
- Check ground conditions – The surface must be firm, level, and stable.
- Ensure operator and occupants are trained and competent.

During Operation

- Fit the basket correctly:
 - **Crane type** – Secure to the hook using a certified lifting chain or master link and safety shackle. Ensure the hook safety latch is fully closed.
 - **Forklift type** – Fully insert forks into sleeves and secure heel pins or locking bolts.
- Keep the basket level before lifting.
- Conduct a test lift with no occupants to check stability and balance.
- Always secure occupants with full-body safety harnesses attached to the internal anchor points.
- Lift and lower slowly – avoid swinging, jerking, or sudden stops.
- Maintain constant communication between the operator and personnel in the basket (use radios if necessary).
- Never move the crane or forklift horizontally while the basket is raised unless specifically designed and approved for that use.
- Keep personnel clear of the area beneath and around the basket.
- Maintain visibility and control at all times.

Do Not

- Exceed the rated capacity of the basket, crane, or forklift.
- Use uncertified, damaged, or modified baskets.
- Lift persons without a competent operator and a supervisor present.
- Use the basket in high winds or adverse weather conditions.
- Stand or climb on handrails or edges of the basket.
- Use without the correct harness and attachment points.
- Use the crane or forklift for other tasks while personnel are in the basket.
- Leave suspended baskets unattended or occupied when stationary.
- Move a forklift-mounted basket with persons inside unless manufacturer-approved for travel.

After Use

- Lower the basket fully and allow occupants to exit safely.
- Inspect for signs of damage or wear (welds, floors, gates, anchor points).
- Clean and remove debris, oil, or materials from the floor.
- Tag out and report any defects immediately.
- Store on firm, level ground in a designated area.
- Keep inspection and maintenance records up to date per LOLER and PUWER.

Safety Reminders

- Always follow manufacturer's instructions and safety signage.
- Carry out a risk assessment and lift plan for all man-basket operations.
- Use only with suitable and certified lifting equipment.
- Never exceed the rated load or number of occupants.
- Ensure exclusion zones are in place under the working area.
- Operators and occupants must wear appropriate PPE: safety harness, helmet with chin strap, gloves, and safety boots.
- Conduct periodic thorough examinations by a competent person as per LOLER.

Support and Maintenance

For service, inspection, and spare parts, contact your local Lifting Gear and Safety Depot

Depot List

Bristol: 0117 9714883

Avonmouth: 0117 9550456

Newport: 01633 334450

Port Talbot: 01639 540007

Pembroke: 01646 574000

Plymouth: 01752 474488

Fareham: 01329 550988

Redruth: 01209 703990