

LANDING STEEL COLUMNS MORE SAFELY

A steel erector lost fingers while lining up bolt holes on a steel column being lowered into place by crane. The erector had been using a 'podger' to tap the bolt into line with the hole. When the bolt located the column dropped about 6cm severing several of the man's fingers. A simple new tool was developed that did away with the need for operators' hands to be anywhere near the danger area.



Key Points:-

1. The solution was a simple one that could be easily fabricated in any workshop and on most sites.
2. The tool was designed in consultation between managers and workers. The detailed practical knowledge of the workers who actually did the job ensured that what was designed would really work in practice.
3. A clear policy that the tool must be used, was energetically pursued by the company. All workers received clear instructions on what the new tool was, how to use it and were left in no doubt that they must do so. A key part of this process was the involvement of the injured person in toolbox talks on this and other issues.
4. At a stroke a substantial hazard was reduced at source across the company's entire activities.
5. The opportunity for genuine involvement of employees in solving a problem has generated a greater awareness of their role. The workforce are more actively involved in resolving problems which helps managers manage health and safety effectively
6. The simplicity of the solution and its consequent ease of implementation encouraged genuine uptake thus reducing the need for management monitoring to be certain that it was happening.

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