

Safety Alert

Serious Incident Unsecured Road Plates

Background/Incident Details

A team excavated a road crossing using 2-way lights to control the traffic. As part of the excavation remained open it was covered with steel plates to enable continued use of the road.

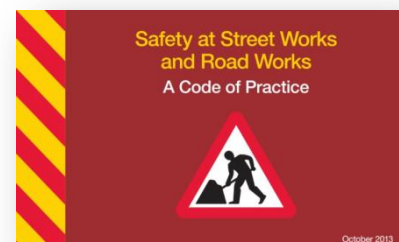
While the site was unattended, and owing to the traffic flow, one of the steel plates moved and became unsafe as it was not covering the width of the excavation. The incident occurred when a member of the public drove their car over the plate. The weight of the driver's car pushed the front of the plate into the excavation resulting in the rear of the plate lifting up and catching the bottom of the car. This then caused the car to lose control and come into contact with an electric pole.

The driver and passenger; a mother and her daughter, were taken to hospital for precautionary measures and were released without any serious injuries.



Key Learning Points

- Road crossings must be reinstated whether permanent or interim, to avoid this type of incident occurring again.
- NRSWA requirement – If steel plates are used they must be made of a suitable material and have an anti-skid surface; they must not create a hazard for cyclists or motorcycles.
- An assessment must be undertaken to ensure the appropriate size and thickness of the steel plates used.
- The sides of excavations must be suitably supported beneath road plates, which must be rigidly secured to the road surface.
- Road plates must have chamfered edges, integral ramps, be sunk into the surface or have a suitable bitumastic material to provide a ramp to the plate level.
- Where ramps exceed 15mm in height, appropriate ramp warning signs should be used.



'The use of road plates must always be authorised by your supervisor, manager or other competent person who will decide on the appropriate size and strength of plate to be used. This will depend on the width of excavation to be spanned and the type and speed of traffic expected to use the plates.'

For further information please refer to **MUS-MOPS-S-071: Procedure for the Management of Footway Boards, Kerb Ramps and Road Plates.**

If in any doubt – contact your Line Manager/Supervisor

Remember

Nothing we do is so important that we cannot take the time to do it safely