

No job is more important.



Safety Alert

N<sup>o</sup>.3 1998

## EXCAVATORS ARE DANGEROUS

There have been a number accidents and incidents recently where workers and members of the public have been injured or killed when hit by excavators.

In one fatal accident, an excavator reversed over a supervisor who walked up to it from behind (to the right rear of the operator). In other accidents, people have been hit by the body of the excavator as it turned from side to side, as part of the digging cycle.

In each case the operator did not know that the person was approaching the machine. The operator could not see them because they approached from his blind side.

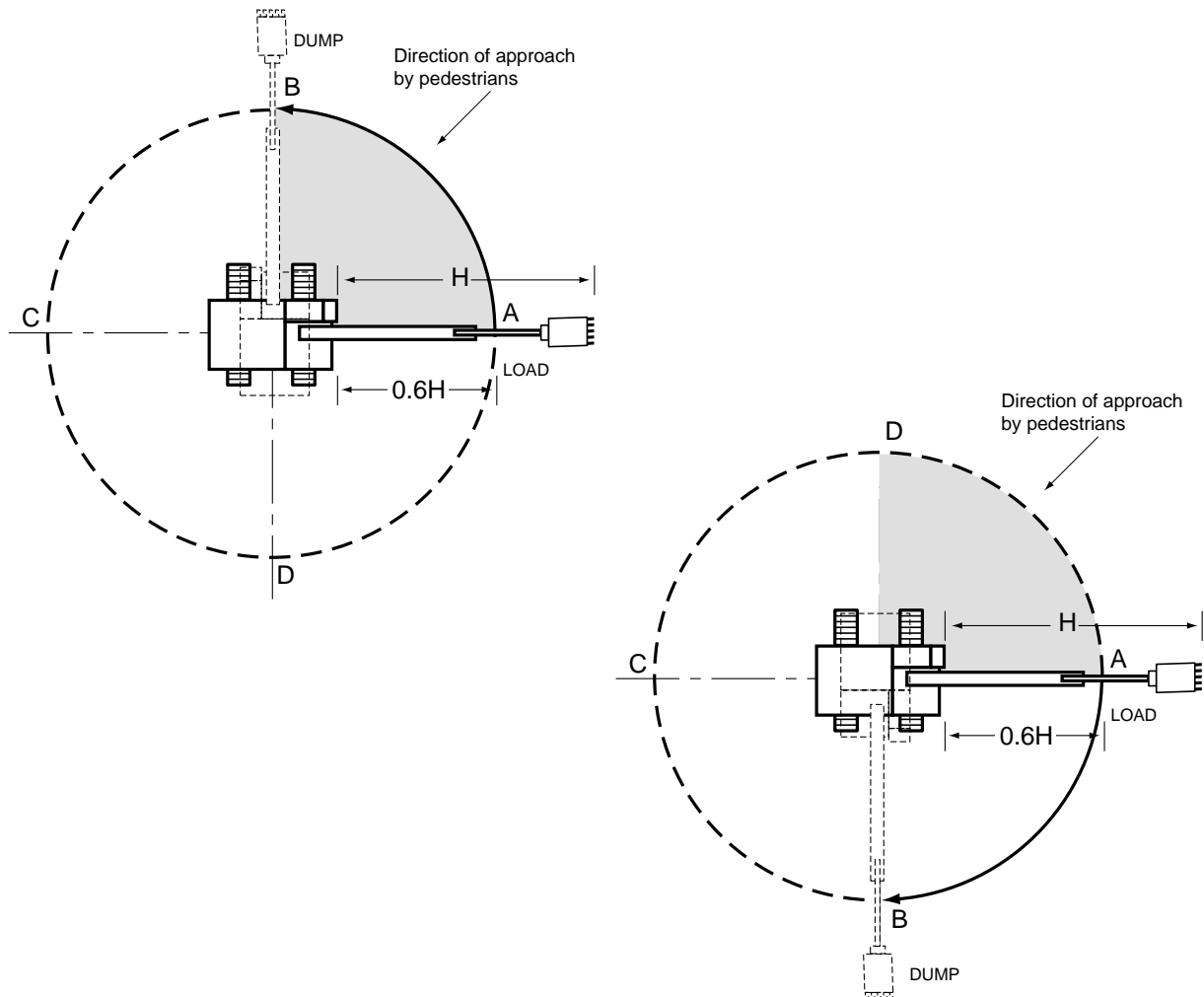
### Contributing Factors

- The digging boom obstructs the forward vision.
- The superstructure obstructs the view behind and to one side.
- The view in any given direction can often be improved by rotating the machine. The act of rotating, however, is hazardous for anyone within the area that is swept by the machine as it rotates.
- The digging process also usually requires the machine to rotate which again is hazardous for anyone within the area that is swept.
- Accurate and productive digging requires concentration.
- Excavators often operate in restricted areas that limit both the view of the operator and the machine movement options.
- Excavators are noisy.

### Recommendations

- Wear clothing that makes you easily visible.
- Study the following diagrams — they are intended to help you identify the direction from which a pedestrian should approach an excavator.
- Approach the area in which the machine is operating from a direction where you can be seen by the operator.
- Stay outside of the range of movement of the excavator — it may move without warning.

- Attract the attention of the operator. Remember that the operator is on a noisy machine and inside a soundproof cab. You are unlikely to be heard calling. To be safe, you must be visible.
- Look around, there are often trucks working with excavators. Approach the machine only after the operator has acknowledged your presence and indicated by clear hand signals or voice contact that it is safe to approach.
- Stay alert and be careful not to trip over or fall in a hole.



If you would like further information phone Workplace Standards Tasmania on  
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