



Joint 'The Fatal 6' Award Winner

Isolation try out point next to mixer point

Tarmac > London and South East RMX



DESCRIPTION

Following a recent isolation breach resulting in a fatality within CRH Americas, a safety call was held to initiate an isolation amnesty across the business.

As part of this initiative, Tarmac conducted site visits to all London and Southeast RMX locations. During these visits, comprehensive reviews of isolation procedures were carried out along with face-to-face discussions with the employees. These conversations included full transparency regarding any breaches, regardless of scale, that may be occurring within these operations.

Upon completion of the reviews, Tarmac identified a potential risk at 6 of the 18 sites visited. Specifically, the location of the isolation TRY OUT button was found to be separate from the lock-out point. This misalignment posed a risk that the final try-out step might be missed, compromising the effectiveness of the isolation process.

This issue directly relates to 'The Fatal 6', specifically contact with moving machinery and isolation.

A meeting with supervisors and the management team explored ways to reduce the risk of the final stage (TRY OUT) not being completed. The outcome was a straightforward electrical modification: installing a button next to the isolation point at each site, enabling the operator to verify the effectiveness of the isolation.

All site teams were briefed on the planned works and responded positively. This change not only enhanced safety at the isolation point but also addressed other logistical challenges. Some sites required operatives to descend three to four flights of stairs and cross live traffic areas to reach the original test point, before returning to the work area. This could lead to rushing, increasing the risk of slips or trips, or even skipping the try-out process altogether.

The quality of the amnesty process from start to finish created an open environment where the site teams knew they were not being penalised for the findings. It was seen as an opportunity for open discussions on how to improve and strengthen safety practices.

Reviewing the HIRAs (Hazard Identification and Risk Assessments) and SSOWs (Safe System of Work) revealed that while the process was functioning, it was not as efficient as it could be. The updated versions represent a significant improvement over the previous approach.

This initiative clearly reflects the MPA Vision Zero values across multiple areas.

BENEFITS

- Significantly reduced the potential for accidental equipment start-up while maintenance or repair work is underway.
- Simple, yet highly effective change to facilitate compliance with 'TRY OUT' procedure.
- Safer working conditions.
- Reinforces the importance of completing the full LOTOTO sequence.
- Safety amnesty supported pro-active and open engagement of all involved.
- Behaviour and safety culture have improved across the sites.
- Process efficiency has increased, with less time spent walking to distant control rooms.
- Risk of procedural shortcuts has been reduced thanks to better accessibility.

DEVELOPMENTS AND TRANSFERABILITY

As part of Tarmac's ongoing commitment to improving safety standards and operational consistency across its facilities, all future plant installations will now include the fitting of a try-out button at the local isolation point for all plant mixers.

This feature should be adopted as a standard requirement across all newly manufactured plants within the industry. Despite ongoing efforts to improve safety, fatalities continue to occur, underscoring the urgent need for proactive and preventative measures. The inclusion of a try-out button represents a critical step forward in mitigating risk and enhancing operator safety.

This initiative has already been successfully implemented across all Ready-mix plants within Tarmac's national operations. Furthermore, the approach has been shared with Tarmac's wider network, including CRH, to encourage broader adoption and alignment with best practices.



Try-Out switch by isolation point

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