

# When a Signaller Is Required by the OHS Laws



As useful as equipment such as forklifts, bulldozers, cranes, hoists, etc. can be, it also poses a risk to workers who can easily get hit or run over by it if appropriate safety measures aren't in place. In addition, the equipment itself can come into contact with [power lines](#), storage racks, etc. and endanger the worker operating the equipment and co-workers. For example, a wood and lumber store worker was using a boom crane to unload a truck when the boom contacted an overhead power line, fatally electrocuting him. The store was convicted of safety violations, including failing to ensure that a competent worker designated as a signaller was in place, and was fined \$85,000 [*Evans Lumber and Builders Supply Ltd.*, Govt. News Release, July 23, 2013].

That's why the OHS laws often require the use of signallers or signal persons under certain hazardous circumstances. Here's a look at when the OHS regulations in each jurisdiction require the use of signallers. (Note: This chart doesn't include the requirements for traffic control persons, who are essentially specialized signallers.)

<b>WHEN IS A SIGNALLER REQUIRED'</b>
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<b>FED</b>	<p><a href="#"><u>OHS Regs.</u></a>:1. No employer may require an operator to operate motorized materials handling equipment unless the operator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) is directed by a signaller; or</li> <li>b) has an unobstructed view of the area in which the equipment is to be operated [Sec. 14.25].</li> </ul> <p>2. When rear-dumping motorized materials handling equipment is used to discharge a load at the edge of a sudden drop in grade level that may cause the equipment to tip and in order to prevent the motorized materials handling equipment from being backed over the edge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a bumping block shall be used; or</li> <li>b) a signaller shall give directions to the operator of the equipment [Sec. 14.40].</li> </ul>
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AB

OHS Code 2009:

1. A material hoist operator must not move the skip, platform or cage until the operator is informed by a designated signaller that it's safe to do so [Sec. 84(b)].
2. If it's impractical to equip powered mobile equipment in accordance with Sec. 267(1), the operator must ensure that the operator and other workers are protected from injury before moving the equipment by:
  - a) doing a visual inspection on foot of the area into which the equipment will move;
  - b) following the directions of a traffic control or warning system;
  - c) getting directions from a designated signaller or other worker who:
    - i) has an unobstructed view of the area into which the equipment will move or
    - ii) is stationed in a safe position in continuous view of the operator; or
  - d) ensuring all other workers are removed from the area into which the equipment will move [Sec. 267(2)].
3. An employer must ensure that if powered mobile equipment may go over a bank or enter a dump opening while it's discharging its load, the equipment is effectively stopped or controlled by:
  - a) an anchored block;
  - b) a ridge of material acting as a backstop; or
  - c) a designated signaller with a stop signal [Secs. 460 & 542].
4. A worker must not fell a tree within the range of a road travelled by other workers or the public unless:
  - a) a designated signaller is on the road to warn those approaching and to stop traffic until the tree is down and it's safe to continue; or
  - b) there are two flags or warning signs at the side of the road at a distance of 30-90 metres from each approach to the place where the tree is to be felled [Sec. 522].

BC	<p style="text-align: center;"><u><a href="#">OHS Reg. :</a></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When the operator of a crane or hoist doesn't have a clear and unobstructed view of the boom, jib, load line, load hook and load throughout the whole range of the hoisting operation, the operator must act only on the directions of a qualified signaller who has a clear view of the things the operator can't see [Sec. 14.47].</li> <li>2. If a mobile equipment operator's view of the work area is obstructed, the operator must not move the equipment until precautions have been taken to protect the operator and any other worker from injury, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) immediately before the movement, the inspection by the operator on foot of the area into which the equipment will be moved;</li> <li>b) direction by a signaller stationed in a safe position in continuous view of the operator and having an unobstructed view of the area into which the equipment will move; or</li> <li>c) direction by a traffic control or warning system [Sec. 16.42].</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
MB	<p style="text-align: center;"><u><a href="#">Workplace Safety and Health Reg. :</a></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An employer must ensure that a worker is designated to act as a signal person when powered mobile equipment at a construction project site travels in a reverse direction or moves in a manner that may create a risk to the safety or health of its operator or any other worker in its vicinity [Sec. 20.7(1)].</li> <li>2. Unless the operator of a crane or hoist has an unobstructed and clear view of its operation, an employer must designate a signal person to give the operator signals to provide for the safe operation of the crane or hoist [Sec. 23.13(1)].</li> <li>3. The employer must assign a signal person to give pre-arranged signals to the operator of equipment or machinery that's used in the vicinity of an overhead electrical line [Sec. 25.6(1)(b)].</li> </ol>

**NB**

[OHS Reg. :](#)

1. An employer must ensure that an operator of powered mobile equipment or a mobile crane doesn't lower material into an excavation or trench and no such operator may lower material into an excavation or trench, unless:
  - a) the operator has unrestricted visibility; or
  - b) a signaller is used to direct the movement of the material [Sec. 186].
2. An employer must designate a competent employee to be a signaller to direct, by means of visual or auditory signals, the safe movement and operation of a hoisting apparatus by an operator [Sec. 212].
3. When a mobile crane is moving from one location to another under its own power, an employer must, when the operator has restricted vision, have a signaller designated under Sec. 212 guide the crane's movement [Sec. 215(b)].

NL	<p style="text-align: center;"><u><a href="#">OHS Regs. 2012:</a></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When a mobile equipment operator's view of the work area is obstructed, the operator may not move the equipment until precautions have been taken to protect the operator and another worker from injury, including:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) immediately before the movement, the inspection by the operator on foot of the area into which the equipment is being moved;</li> <li>b) direction by a signaller:                 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) stationed in a safe position in continuous view of the operator,</li> <li>ii) having an unobstructed view of the area into which the equipment is being moved, and</li> <li>iii) not being otherwise occupied while the equipment is in motion; or</li> </ol> </li> <li>c) direction by a traffic control or warning system [Sec. 272].</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. When necessary, a worker designated as a signaller must walk ahead of a moving load and warn workers to keep clear [Sec. 317(2)].</li> <li>3. The operator of a crane or hoist must act only on the directions of a designated and competent signaller when the operator doesn't have a clear and unobstructed view of the load hook and load throughout the whole range of the hoisting operation [Sec. 321].</li> </ol>
NT/ NU	<p style="text-align: center;"><u><a href="#">General Safety Regs.:</a></u></p> <p>Work platforms must be controlled by the standard code of hand signals or by effective radio or telephone communication and no movement may be undertaken except on receipt of a clearly understood signal from the designated signalperson on the platform [Sec. 327(2)(k)].</p>

NS

Occupational Safety General Regs.:

1. An employer must designate one or more competent persons as a signaller to direct the safe movement of a load, hoist, lift truck or powered mobile equipment where the operator of that hoist, lift truck or powered mobile equipment:

- a) doesn't have an adequate view of the load;
- b) doesn't have a clear view of the route the load is to take;
- c) isn't able to see clearly around the equipment when moving and hasn't taken measures sufficient to ensure that no person is exposed to a hazard as a result of the movement of equipment;
- d) isn't able to see clearly where the hoist or its load may encroach the minimum distance specified in Sec. 126 or a hoist is positioned closer than the length of its boom to an overhead energized power line or power line equipment; or
- e) is causing the equipment to move under its own power from one location to another and the situation creates a hazard in the workplace [Sec. 57(1)].

2. When an operator of equipment referred to in Sec. 165(2) [a heavy weight suspended by cable from a crane or other hoist; power shovel, bulldozer or other powered mobile equipment] can't see where the material from demolition will fall, the employer must ensure that a signaller guides the operator [Sec. 165(6)].

ON

Construction Projects Reg.:

1. Operators of vehicles, machines and equipment must be assisted by signallers if either of the following applies:

a) The operator's view of the intended path of travel is obstructed; or

b) A person could be endangered by the vehicle, machine or equipment or by its load [Sec. 104(3)]. (This section also applies to shovels, backhoes and similar excavating machines and to cranes and similar hoisting devices [Sec. 104(4)].)

2. A competent worker, designated as a signaller, must be stationed so that he or she is in full view of the operator and has a clear view of an electrical conductor and of the vehicle or equipment and must warn the operator each time any part of the vehicle or equipment or its load may approach the minimum distance [Sec. 188(8)].

Industrial Establishments Reg.:

1. Where the operator of a vehicle, mobile equipment, crane or similar material handling equipment doesn't have a full view of the intended path of travel of the vehicle, mobile equipment, crane or similar material handling equipment or its load, the vehicle, mobile equipment, crane or similar material handling equipment must only be operated as directed by a signaller who's a competent person [Sec. 56].

2. A tree may be felled alongside or across a road only after the road has been blocked off or controlled by a signaller [Sec. 109(b)].



<p><b>PE</b></p>	<p><u><i>OHS Regs. :</i></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An employer must ensure that no operator lowers material into an excavation or trench and no operator shall lower material into an excavation or trench unless: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the operator has unrestricted visibility; or</li> <li>b) a signaller is used to direct the movement of the material [Sec. 12.7].</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. The employer must ensure that the operator of a hoisting apparatus moves a load only on a signal from a signaller designated under this section [Sec. 34.7(1)].</li> <li>3. When a crane is moving from one location to another under its own power, the employer must designate a signaller to guide the crane's movement [Sec. 34.11(b)].</li> </ol>
<p><b>QC</b></p>	<p><u><i>Reg. on Occupational Health and Safety:</i></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If the operator of a hoisting device doesn't have an unrestricted view during any manoeuvre, one or more signalmen must assist the operator [Sec. 253].</li> <li>2. When a self-propelled vehicle moves in reverse, a signalman must direct the driver if such a move poses a risk for the safety of a worker or the driver [Sec. 284].</li> </ol>
<p><b>SK</b></p>	<p><u><i>OHS Regs. :</i></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An employer or contractor must designate a signaller pursuant to Sec. 132 when the operator of a hoist or crane doesn't have a clear, unobstructed view of any of the following throughout the whole range of movement of the load or hook: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the pick-up point;</li> <li>b) the setting point and the load; or</li> <li>c) the hook, if there's no load [Sec. 210(1)].</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. When an operator doesn't have a clear view of the entire loading or unloading operation, an employer or contractor must ensure that a signaller with a clear view of the operation and visible to the operator is designated pursuant to Sec. 132(1) to give all signals necessary to ensure the safety of a worker involved in the loading or unloading operation [Sec. 401(9)].</li> </ol>

YT

OHS Reg. :

1. When traveling with a load on a crane, a worker, designated as a signaller, must walk ahead of a moving load, warning workers and others to keep clear [Sec. 5.31(b)].
2. A crane or hoist operator must act only on directions from a designated and qualified signaller whenever the operator doesn't have a clear and unobstructed view of the load hook and load throughout the whole range of the hoisting operation [Sec. 5.33(1)].
3. When a mobile equipment operator's view of the work area is obstructed, the operator must not move the equipment until precautions have been taken to protect the operator and any other worker from injury, including:
  - a) the inspection, by the operator on foot, of the area into which the equipment will be moved;
  - b) direction by a signaller stationed in a safe position in continuous view of the operator and having an unobstructed view of the area into which the equipment will move; or
  - c) direction by a traffic control or warning system [Sec. 6.38].
4. When a worker is on top of a building, load or equipment, the driver must move the vehicle only upon direction received from the worker on top through a signaller who is visible by both the driver and the worker on the top [Sec. 10.55(4)].