

HSEQ Bulletin

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Controlling MEWP Access and Security

Brian Parker outlines how the SmartZone device controls and monitors the use of powered access machines.

SmartZone brings far reaching improvements to safety for operators of Mobile Elevated Work Platforms (MEWPs) because it ensures that machines cannot be operated by anyone who has not been properly trained and authorised to use them.

SmartZone can be used with the IPAF Smart PAL Card, or alternatively with the CSCS Smart Card. This can also be used as a standalone Smart Card reader. SmartZone prevents users from operating any piece of plant unless they have the correct training, their licence is in date and they have been approved by their employer or the site management to be on that specific piece of plant at that time.

SmartZone also delivers environmental benefits to construction sites as the machine's 'Detailed Usage Reports' allows for management to determine whether or not additional plant is required on the project or if there is enough capacity with the plant already on site to accommodate any new contractors who are due to arrive. This in turn leads to a reduction in logistical movement of plant to and from site.

As well as preventing unauthorised machine use, SmartZone also:

- Prompts familiarisation training
- Highlights the need for pre-use checks
- Checks on operator's history of MEWP use
- **Geofence:** If the machines are driven out of designated areas, they will not restart once they have been locked or shut down.
- **Auto lock facility**
- **Working schedules:** SmartZone can be set up with specific working schedules, allowing only certain operators to use MEWPs between given time periods.
- **Track and trace:** shows the exact location of MEWPs on site.

SmartZone In Action

When a brand new scissor lift from the AFI hire fleet was stolen recently from Pontefract Racecourse, we were able to track it as it was being transported along the M62 and guide the Police to its final destination. This was possible because the Skyjack scissor lift was fitted with SmartZone.

We successfully accessed SmartZone remotely from a laptop and saw that the machine had been moved to Batley in West Yorkshire. We informed the Police but before they could get to the location the machine was on the move again, this time westbound along the M62. It ended up on an industrial estate in Lancashire.

The Police could not gain entry straight away to the building where it had been stowed so we then accessed SmartZone remotely again, this time to isolate the machine, ensuring that it could not be moved again. The Police entered the building later and we were able to get the machine back.

SmartZone has been recognised by winning two major industry events in 2015, firstly, the 'Equipment Supplier of the year' award at the Construction News Specialists awards and then again at the Hire Association of Europe Excellence Awards by winning 'Product of the year'.



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