**Introduction**

Firstly, as a SHEQ Team, we would like to thank you all for keeping our sites safe. We all must continue to look out for each and by doing so we can all go home safe every day. Remember, think safe, work safe, home safe.

As we approach the Christmas break and shut down our sites, we must remain focused on safety.

The hazards and risks out there are still present and closing our sites down for the Christmas break can increase some hazards and potentially introduce new ones. It is important to ensure demobilising activities are properly assessed and planned.

Many serious accidents have occurred on construction sites in the UK because of peripheral operations that were not well planned and controlled.

On the 23rd of December our sites shut down for Christmas and New Year, however, before you start enjoying that well-earned break, a few things need to be done to ensure our sites are left safe and secure, so here are a few things we can do to start getting ready for the shutdown:

**Access & Egress**

* Consideration must be given to the likely increase in traffic to site – what will this mean for the conditions of haul roads and access routes on site?
* Has the likely increase in traffic to site been considered, such as transport for the removal of mobile plant over the break been considered?
* Safe pedestrian access and egress must be guaranteed and factored into the shutdown process.
* Remember that winter is here and will have some impact on your site access and traffic routes.
* Is the site ready for the potential increase in the number of vehicles on site, the mud as a result of more wet weather, and this mud ending up on the roads?
  + check site arrangements for preventing mud from getting onto the roads and if they will cope.

**Security**

* Wherever possible, all plant and equipment should be removed from the site if it cannot be secured behind locked doors and out of sight – such as a locked container. Mobile Plant should be removed from site and brought back after the Christmas break.
* **Plan ahead.** Ensure that you have pre-booked any hire machinery that you may require upon your return to site in January.
* Consideration must be given to the security requirements over the Christmas break.
  + Will additional security cameras or patrols be required?
  + Check the perimeter fencing is in place and secure
  + Check all gates
  + Lock up all entrance points
  + Lock up all containers
  + Consider parking dumper or roller in front of containers to deter theft
  + Where plant is to remain on site, making sure cab guards are fitted and secured to all plant where available
  + Remove isolators from all mobile plant and consider holding keys off site
  + Is safety/hazard signage in place and clearly displayed on site perimeters?
  + Remove waste and flammable materials to reduce the risk of arson
  + Barrier or cover all excavations. Remove ladders and store securely.
  + Provide an out of hours emergency contact for the site

**Plant/People Interface**

As vehicle and plant movements are likely to increase as we demobilise and plant is removed from site for security, consider the following:

* Plan and manage the segregation of people and plant wherever possible, a traffic management plan must be in place.
* People are often injured or killed in the UK by plant that is reversing without the assistance of a banksman; always ensure there is a banksman around to assist the plant operator and ensure audiovisual collision avoidance systems are operational and operative knows how to use them.
* Pedestrians must use designated walkways; avoid the temptation of shortcuts across vehicle/plant traffic routes.
* The very nature of some mobile plant means that the driver has only limited visibility; never approach an area where plant is operating without speaking to the supervisor or the banksman first.
  + Know how to approach and pass mobile plant, use the “thumbs up” and get the “thumbs up” from the operator before approaching or passing. Ensure you are familiar with the plant safety zones
* When parking, ensure the parking brake is on and the wheels are chocked where necessary.
  + Accidents have been caused by items of runaway plant.
* Plant operators must be fully aware of and understand their tasks and movements for the day and task ahead; any and all changes to the original plan must be arranged with the supervisor and the banksman, any changes must be briefed to the team so all are aware of newly arranged plant movements and daily briefing updated.

**Banksmen**

* Only work as a banksman if you are trained, competent, and hold the necessary competency card for the task
* Ensure you have reliable two-way communication with the operator or the plant; ensure the equipment works properly. Stop works immediately if your comms devices fail or break down and alert your supervisor.
* Be as visible as possible (maximum high-vis PPE) and stand where the plant operator can see you, but where you can also see anyone approaching the area.
* Ensure you are familiar with the plant safety zones.
* Only allow plant to be used for their intended design purpose and nothing else.
* Check that the operator has completed his daily check first.
* You must know and understand the days operational activities on your site and the movements of the plant under your control very well – any deviation from the plan must be discussed, planned and risk assessed with the supervisor first; these new arrangements must be recorded and briefed to all workers on site.
* Always check your work area first before setting your plant to work; ensure the site is appropriately set up and exclusion zones have been communicated.

**Lifting Operations**

* Lifting operations may well increase as a result of shutting down for Christmas and the New Year
  + Ensure that a lift plan is in place and briefed to those involved for all lifting operations and that lifting is undertaken by competent persons who hold an approved lifting ops qualification and lifting equipment and accessories used in date and inspected before use.

**Traffic Management**

* Will TM be in place over the Christmas break?
* Is the appropriate signing, guarding, and lighting in place?
* Who is responsible and how will it be managed?

**Public Rights of Way (PROW)**

Is your site impacted by PROWS? If yes,

* How will these be maintained over the Christmas break?
* A check must be conducted as part of the demobilisation process to ensure PROWs are left in good condition for public use.
* Will there be increased interface with the public during shutdown activities and how will this be managed?

**Dewatering Operations**

Will pumping operations have to be maintained over the Christmas break? If yes,

* How will this be managed?
* Who is responsible?
* Has the task been risk assessed and are there emergency procedures in place for the person(s) checking on the pumps?

**Stay safe, look out for each other. Plan your site shutdown, and above all enjoy Christmas and the New Year.**