

PRESS RELEASE

ASUCplus takes the lead in guarding of rigs

ASUCplus is taking the lead in ensuring that all its specialist underpinning and subsidence contractors are fully compliant with the HSE's policy on the guarding of rigs under the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.

The association fully endorses any measure that ensures the safety of the workforce and to this end it has implemented a compliance declaration amongst its membership to ensure that all member contractors are fully aware of the recommendations and are employing them on all their sites. To further underline this commitment, any members not complying will be in breach of the ASUCplus Byelaws as this now forms part of their regular H&S audits.

The cost of meeting these regulations has been onerous (ASUCplus calculates that the increased cost for example on a piled raft using a guarded rig is between 10 and 15% depending on the size of the job). It also required considerable ingenuity on the part of contractors to provide guards for a variety of rigs and working conditions. It also naturally slows down the process of piling – possibly taking as much as 25% longer, and operatives need to be fully trained in working with these new systems. Compliant contractors are therefore keen to ensure that the HSE brings contractors using unguarded rigs to book as by using unsafe practices they may be gaining an unfair competitive advantage.

The message from ASUCplus is, before you engage an underpinning contractor, check:

- Are they protecting their workforce by fully complying with the regulation on guarding of rigs?
- Do they have operatives who are fully trained in safe practice?
- Will the contractor meet CDM regulations requirements?
- Are they members of a professional, regulated trade body?
- Can they offer a meaningful guarantee?

For a list of registered specialist contractors, who can fulfil all these requirements and more, go to www.asuc.org.uk

6 April 2010

WORDS: 318



Notes to editors: ASUCplus is the only association representing specialist contractors in subsidence repair techniques and engineered foundation solutions. The latent defects insurance can cover all the works carried out under contract at a property - not just the subsidence repair. Members of ASUCplus offer an

extended range of foundation solutions, including new build, basements and other forms of subsidence repairs.

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