

# OHS ALERT



MAY 2023

## PRECAST LIFTING SYSTEMS - CLUTCH AND ANCHOR COMPATIBILITY.

Clutches and cast in anchors (lifters) whilst individual components, are regarded in all construction safety guidance material as "lifting systems". The individual components must be compatible and be tested by the manufacturer/supplier as a complete lifting system.

The current applicable Australian Standard requires that *"All components to be used on site within the system shall be compatible. Different proprietary components shall not be mixed without verification of compatibility..." (AS 3850 Part 1, clause 2.1).*

An amendment to the AS 3850 has been proposed stating "Should clutches and inserts that have varying WLL be compatible, either they shall be rated at the tested lower WLL, or a suitable method to ensure the lower capacity WLL will not be exceeded...".

Generally, clutches are designed not to be usable between different manufacturers and/or working load limits (WLL) however, in recent years, changes in lifter design physically allow different rated clutches to fit lower or higher rated anchors - potentially confusing workers as to the actual working load limit of the combined lifting system.

Best practice states that clutches with a lesser WLL than the lifter/anchor WLL - should not be used. The lifter/anchor is an integral part of the panel and cannot be altered, so the lifting system needs to be designed around the lifter/anchor WLL. In other words - a 10t lifter/anchor requires a 10t lifting system.

It is important for all precast workers handling precast panels and other precast concrete elements, to err on the side of caution and ensure the WLL of the lifter/anchor and the WLL of the clutch are the same - and the WLL of the lifting system is never exceeded.

**If in any doubt phone the CFMEU for advice.**



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