

SSOW 19: INSPECTING + REPLACING PLANT TRACKS

Issue Number: 04

Date of Issue: 31/01/2026

Based on: RA76

PURPOSE

To ensure plant track inspection and replacement activities are carried out safely and in a controlled manner, preventing crush injuries, equipment failure, manual handling harm, and plant–people interface risks. This SSOW sets out the safe working practices, competency requirements, and equipment standards required to inspect, remove, and refit tracks in accordance with RA76, manufacturer guidance, and site-specific rules.

PPE REQUIREMENTS

For this activity, the following PPE must be worn

					
☒	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐
High-vis Vest / Jacket (BS EN 471)	Safety Boots (EN ISO 20345:2011) (S3)	Safety Gloves (Cut resistant) (EN 420:2003)	N/A	N/A	N/A

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- Competent and authorised fitters only.
- Familiarity with RA76.
- Competency in safe use of jacks, lifting points, and track-suspension methods.
- Awareness of overhead power cable exclusion distances (GS6).
- Competence in manual handling techniques and use of hand tools.
- Understanding of communication requirements when working in pairs.
- Knowledge of pre-use checks and defect reporting for lifting equipment.

EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

- Suitable jacks and jack stands with adequate SWL.
- Lifting points or excavator boom/dipper (where appropriate) for track suspension.
- Hand tools such as crowbars, grease guns, and removal tools.
- Replacement track in correct size and specification.
- Barriers or fencing to establish a segregated working area.

SAFE SYSTEM OF WORK

- On arrival to site must report to site security/office on arrival at any customer site and wait further instruction before continuing.
- All L Lynch personnel to attend Main Contractor Site Induction.
- Site rules to be adhered with at all times by L Lynch personnel.
- Site PPE requirements to be adhered with by L Lynch personnel, eye protection and gloves must be worn.
- Never work directly underneath overhead power cables. Never work within 9 metres horizontally of overhead power cables supported on wooden poles. Never work within 15 metres horizontally of overhead power cables supported on steel pylons or structures.
- Ensure communication is maintained with the second fitter at all times during the operation.
- Ensure that no unauthorised personnel are in the area prior to commencing.
- All repairs and replacements should only be carried out by qualified and competent personnel.
- Before changing the tracks, it is important to prepare the machine and workspace. Ensure that the working area is segregated, use physical barriers wherever possible.
- Ensure that the plant/machine is parked on firm, level ground.

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- Isolate the plant/machine and track motors by engaging the safety lever (where fitted engage the Deadman's lever)
- Suspend the track (lift the plant/machines undercarriage free from the ground). For non-excavator, a lift plan must be produced and briefed along with this SSOW. For non-excavator, use lifting points and suspend the track. If the plant/machine is an excavator, use the dipper and boom to assist.
- Remove the grease fitting. Step on the bottom side of the track and release track tension, collapse the idler, inspect and determine whether the grease fitting requires replacing. For larger machines assistance may be required.
- With assistance from a qualified competent fitter, place jack stands beneath the carriage of the plant / machine. Ensure that the jacks are capable of the load, check the SWL details on the jack prior to use.
- Remove the track by pulling the track from the machine. Once removed, move this out of the immediate working area.
- Inspect top/bottom rollers, idlers and sprocket teeth for any wear/damages.
- Clean excess debris and dirt from the undercarriage.
- Position and hook the replacement track onto the sprocket teeth at the rear of the plant/machine.
- Using a crowbar or assisting plant, align the front of the track into position on the idler.
- To break in the new track, run a few revolutions to ensure that this has been installed correctly. Ensure that no personnel are in the area when doing this.
- Check the track tension, general rule of thumb is three fingers from the bottom rollers. Tension can be adjusted through the grease nipples by pumping grease back into the track adjuster.
- Lower the track to the floor lifting the plant/machine so that the rear of the track connects gently with the floor.

IDENTIFIED RISKS

The SSOW above has been compiled after identifying the following risks from this activity

- Failure of boom/lifting equipment/lifting points/Deadman's lever/jacks
- Injuries sustained to hands/eyes
- Manual handling resulting in musculoskeletal injuries
- Use of hand tools and equipment
- PPI – Plant people interface
- Slips/Trips

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE REFER TO RISK ASSESSMENT RA76

Owner: Head of HSQE	Version: 2	LF266
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