

# Safety Observer/ Spotter

## Competency and General Requirements (All Spotters)

- Must be **competent and trained** for the specific spotting task.
- Must understand site-specific SWMS, permits, and emergency procedures.
- Must be physically positioned to maintain clear, uninterrupted visibility.
- Must have authority to **stop work**.
- Must use high-visibility PPE and maintain situational awareness at all times.

### Spotter – Excavation Work

A spotter for excavation activities provides **continuous observation and hazard warning** to plant operators and workers to prevent ground collapse, service strikes, and personnel interaction incidents.

#### Primary Role

To maintain visual oversight of excavation activities and **warn operators and workers of hazards** that may not be visible from the plant cab or work position.

#### Key Responsibilities

- Maintain constant visual contact with the excavation area and plant movements.
- Monitor exclusion zones and ensure persons enter the excavation or swing radius of an excavator while in operation.
- Identify signs of ground instability, such as:
  - Cracking
  - Slumping
  - Water ingress
- Watch for underground services in accordance with service plans and potholing results.
- Check for marker tape / change in ground conditions where a possible service is identified during excavation works.
- Direct plant operators using agreed hand signals or two-way radio communication.
- Guide reversing vehicles and plant.
- Ensure spoil piles are kept at safe distances from trench edges.
- Stop work immediately if unsafe conditions are observed.
- Assist in maintaining safe access and egress to excavations.
- Communicate changing site conditions (weather, vibration, traffic).

#### Limitations

- Must not undertake other tasks that distract from spotting duties.

Does not replace engineering controls or supervision responsibilities.





### Spotter – Working Near Overhead Power Lines

A spotter near overhead power lines is a **critical safety role** used where minimum approach distances cannot be maintained by engineering controls alone.

#### Primary Role

To ensure plant, equipment, and loads maintain the required **minimum approach distances (MAD)** from live overhead electrical assets.

#### Key Responsibilities

- Continuously monitor the distance between plant, loads, and power lines.
- Understand and enforce the applicable minimum approach distances under state legislation and network operator requirements.
- Maintain uninterrupted observation of the plant and exclusion zones.
- Provide clear, timely instructions to operators to prevent encroachment.
- Use dedicated communication methods (radio or agreed hand signals).
- Stop work immediately if minimum distances are at risk of being breached.
- Confirm the location, voltage, and status of overhead services before work starts.
- Assist with positioning physical controls such as tiger tails or barriers (where authorised).
- Ensure no part of the plant, load, or attachments enters the danger zone.

#### Limitations

- Must not be assigned any other task while acting as a spotter.
- Cannot replace isolation, relocation, or de-energisation where these controls are reasonably practicable.

### Spotter – Elevated Work Platforms (EWP)

A spotter for EWPs acts as a **ground-based safety observer**, particularly where plant movement, obstructions, or people present a collision or entrapment risk.

#### Primary Role

To assist the EWP operator by monitoring hazards outside the operator's field of view and ensuring safe movement and positioning.

#### Key Responsibilities

- Observe the EWP's travel path and work envelope.
- Monitor overhead obstructions (structures, services, powerlines).
- Maintain exclusion zones beneath and around the EWP.
- Provide clear directions to the operator during:
  - Travel
  - Slewing
  - Elevation
- Warn of potential crush or entrapment hazards.
- Assist with emergency lowering procedures if required (if trained and authorised).
- Ensure ground conditions remain stable and suitable for EWP operation.
- Communicate via hand signals or radio using agreed protocols.
- Stop work if unsafe conditions develop.

#### Limitations

- Must remain on the ground at all times.
- Must not operate the EWP unless trained and authorised.



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Meeting Conducted by:			Signed:		
Other issues addressed:					
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Action Required:					
Action			By Whom		By When
Attendance (all participants to print name and sign):					
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