



## February 16 — Barricade Authority Failure

<p>Had our newbie do ground spot for a hoist and he/she allowed 2 people to pass through the barricade as the load was overhead and lowering down. And that could be a serious injury</p>	<p>I explained that I know it can be tough to be a man but speaking up is important. I told he/she for the 4th time, no one is to pass or be under load during hoisting</p>
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During a hoisting operation, a new ground spotter allowed two people to pass through a barricaded area while a load was overhead and being lowered.

**A load hung high, the line was drawn,  
But two walked through from dusk to dawn.  
Hold the line, don't let them pass,  
Steel above can fall too fast.**

The hoist wasn't the problem the boundary was.

Barricades exist to separate people from danger, and the spotter's role is to enforce that line without exception. New workers often feel pressure to be polite, avoid conflict, or keep things moving. But overhead loads don't respond to courtesy. Once people enter the line of fire, the risk becomes immediate and severe.

This wasn't a bad intention. It was a missing understanding of authority.

### Hazards

- Struck-by injuries from falling or shifting loads
- Crush injuries from suspended equipment
- Rigging failure consequences affecting people below
- Chain-reaction injuries if workers scatter suddenly
- Fatalities from overhead load incidents

### Stats

- Overhead loads are among the highest severity hazards in industrial work
- Many rigging incidents involve unauthorized personnel entering restricted zones
- New or inexperienced workers are more likely to hesitate to enforce boundaries
- Line-of-fire incidents remain a leading cause of serious injuries and fatalities

### Words of Wisdom

- A barricade is not a suggestion.
- The spotter's job is to stop people, not please them.

### Pause and Think

New workers often want to do a good job and avoid confrontation. But in high-risk tasks, hesitation becomes a hazard. The spotter is not there to negotiate access they are there to protect lives. Teaching new employees that they have full authority to hold the line is critical to preventing overhead load incidents.

- Why is it hard for new workers to enforce barricades?
- What should a spotter do when someone tries to cross anyway?
- How do we support new employees in high-responsibility roles?