# Learning Bulletin - RIDDOR

On 18.03.2026 A Clancy team were using an excavator-mounted breaker to move sections of tarmac left from works completed by a Thames Water R&M team from the previous night. During the activity, an unattached hose end swung from the breaker dropping to the ground. A Clancy operative, without prompt, entered the exclusion zone to retrieve the hose. At moment of entry and with the breaker point grounded, the breaker attachment became detached from the excavator quick hitch and fell towards the operative. The quick hitch mounting end landed on the top of the operative's right foot (314kg - point of impact highlighted). The injury resulted in a RIDDOR (over-seven-day injury) being recorded.

**Findings:**

The IP stepped into the excavator/breaker exclusion zone (reflex reaction) with good intention to retrieve a hose end that had come loose to prevent any damage.

The quick hitch cannot have been fully attached at both connection points, with the sprung latch mechanism failing, releasing the breaker attachment. Gravel or another material may have prevented the sprung latch from functioning correctly (reconstruction planned with stakeholders in attendance).

**Root Causes:**

- The experienced excavator operator had retrieved the breaker attachment and tracked with it attached to the works location. The operator may not have engaged the ram on the primary hitch due to distraction (other site activities) or engaged the ram too early believing the attachment was fully seated.
- The second method of attachment (sprung latch) clearly failed, and conversations had on site with excavator operators and plant fitter confirmed that the mechanism can become stuck/seized with site debris. This machine had been moving shingle at the end of the previous shift.
- The IP failed to comply with excavator exclusion zones (behavioural).

**Recommendations:**

- **Always ensure attachments are secured prior to undertaking any activity and record the checks.**
- **Implement, monitor and maintain exclusion zones at all times.**