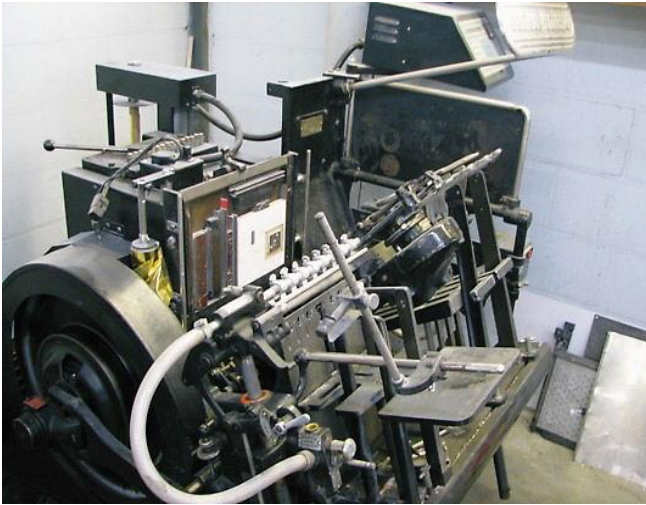


Safety Notice

2nd September 2013



Guarding requirements

The Heidelberg and Thompson Platen machine has been widely used in the Printing industry for many years, with many being converted from a printing unit to a block foiling machine.

Although there appears to be very little information regarding accidents, these machines and the level of safety features they have, has been questioned by Health and Safety Executive inspectors over the last five years.

Concerns have been raised over the level of compliance with the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998, regulation 11 (guarding).

Background

The Provisions and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998, regulation 11, requires the employer to ensure that work equipment is adequately guarded to prevent access to dangerous parts of machinery.

The BPIF has been made aware of only a small number of isolated incidents over the years, with many employers reporting that although there is very little guarding in place, the platen machines are only operated by well trained and competent operatives, who have many years of experience behind them.

Incidents that the BPIF are aware of are mostly around injury caused by operatives being struck by the 'windmill' flick action of the mechanical system. Otherwise, there appears to be a good safety record. However, in the eyes of the the law for workplace safety, the Platen does not meet the requirements of PUWER in relation to not having suitable guarding to prevent a person accessing dangerous parts of machinery.

Employers must be mindful that those operatives with 20/30 or more years of experience will disappear in time as they retire, seeing the new generation of machine operatives who may not be fully aware of all the machine hazards due to lack of experience.

After consultation between the BPIF and the HSE, the HSE have now confirmed that both the Heidelberg and Thompson Platen machines will require additional and improved guarding arrangements, to meet regulation 11 of PUWER, to protect against crushing and contact hazards of these machines.

Action

Employers who have Platen machines (Heidelberg or Thompson) should review their machinery risk assessments ensuring the following hazard points are now covered by their assessment:

1. Inking rollers, if still in place and operating and access to the platen must be guarded from any trapping and crushing points of the machine. This can be achieved by either fixed or interlocked side guards.
2. Install a suitably sized front guard to offer better protection from the windmill arm when in operation. Note: if the guard is too large, this will introduce a further hazard when the machine stop arm is elevated.
3. Suitable and sufficient guarding to the rear of the machine should be provided. This can be achieved by either its positioning or with fixed panel guards (steel mesh type guard acceptable) or install small local guards, Perspex or steel guards, installed at identified hazard points of the machine such as exposed linkages and air rams/pistons.

Key points to consider

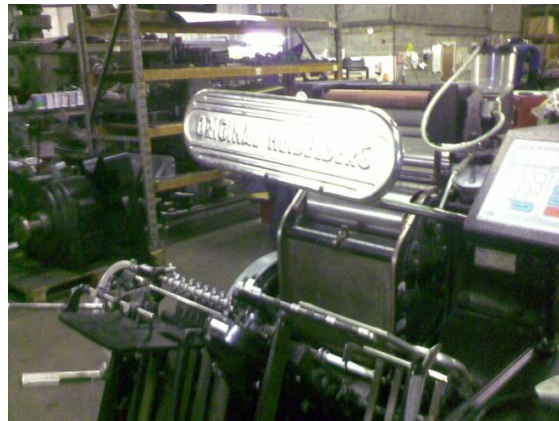
1. The risk assessment must consider operator interaction whether setting/make ready
2. Running the machine
3. Cleaning the machine
4. Any maintenance undertaken on the machine
5. Adequate operator training has been provided and documented
6. Adequate level of supervision provided especially with new operatives

Typical problem areas to assess and apply suitable guarding

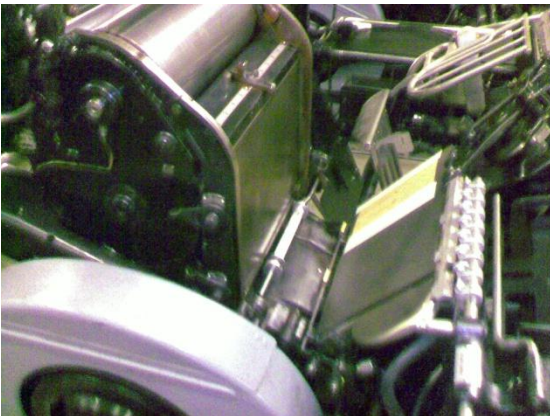
Inking roller arms



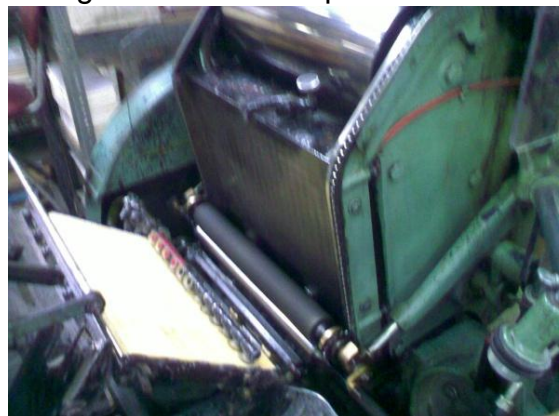
Windmill flick zone



Platen zone



Inking roller arms and platen

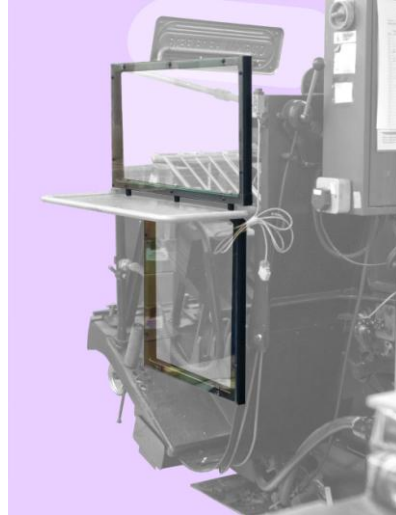


Examples of suitable guarding solutions

Use of side guard, to be fixed or interlocked



Table in use with fixed or interlocked side cover (top and bottom)



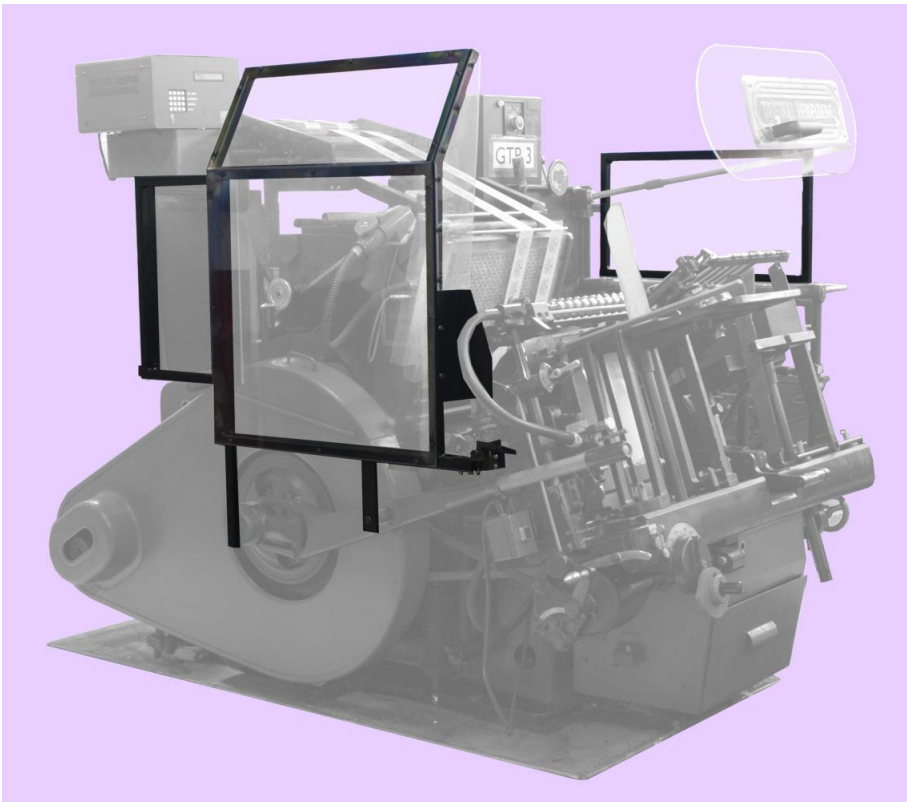
Additional Windmill guarding



Interlocked pivot guard to platen and inking roller mechanism zone



Example



Note: Where there is access to mechanical workings for example, nip points at the rear of the machine, these areas should be suitably guarded by either fixed local guarding or by location of machine for example, against internal wall, with one section of steel mesh guarding installed to prevent unauthorised access.

For further information, please contact your local Health, Safety and Environmental Adviser.

The aforementioned points are general guidelines that have been produced by the BPIF through consultation with the Health and Safety Executive, over concerns of non compliance under the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998, regulation 11 access to dangerous parts of machinery.

It is the responsibility of each employer and self employed person to assess work equipment, to ensure that all hazards exposed to the operator or other persons, during the machine use and other tasks, are adequately safeguarded, so far as is reasonably practicable.