

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU COMMIT

Questions to Ask Any Forklift or Mobile Plant Safety Vendor

A practical buyer guide for comparing safety systems against real operating risk.

01

Does the system detect workers when vision is obscured behind racking, pallets, plant or containers?

This is one of the most important questions. Many forklift and mobile plant risks occur when the operator cannot see the person in time. Camera-only systems depend on line of sight, which can be limited by racking, pallets, containers, glare, low light or congestion. SonaSafe's tagged detection uses sonar and UWB to help detect workers where vision may be obscured.

02

Does it alert both the operator and the pedestrian, or only one person?

A system that only alerts the operator still relies on one person seeing, hearing and reacting in time. SonaSafe can alert both the operator and the pedestrian at risk, creating two chances to prevent the incident. This is especially important in noisy, busy or high-movement environments.

03

Are the alerts real-time, or more for surveillance and training purposes?

Footage and reports are useful after an event, but they do not prevent the moment of risk. SonaSafe is designed to support real-time awareness and prevention. Alerts are delivered when a configured risk zone is entered, while reporting helps teams understand patterns and improve behaviour over time.

04

Can it support vehicle speed reduction or intervention controls where technically suitable?

Warning-only systems stop at the alert. In some environments, a higher level of control may be required. Where technically available and site-suitable, SonaSafe can support intervention controls such as vehicle speed reduction in configured risk zones. This helps move safety from awareness toward active prevention.

05

Can the system be configured by zone, vehicle type, task and workforce group?

One fixed detection bubble rarely suits a whole site. Different zones, vehicles, tasks and worker groups create different risks. SonaSafe can be configured around the way the site actually operates, helping align alerts and controls to real risk rather than forcing one setting across every area.

06

How does it reduce nuisance alerts and maintain operator trust?

If alerts are too frequent or irrelevant, operators can start to ignore them. SonaSafe's site-specific configuration helps reduce unnecessary alerts by tailoring detection zones, safe zones, business rules and alert logic to the operating environment. Better alert relevance supports better adoption.

07

Does it provide data that helps identify repeat-risk zones and behaviour trends?

The best safety systems help teams see patterns, not just isolated events. SonaSafe provides dashboard reporting and safety data to help identify repeat-risk zones, proximity events, exclusion-zone breaches and behaviour trends. This supports toolbox talks, corrective action and leadership reporting.

08

Can the system start simple and scale to higher-confidence protection later?

Some sites are ready for tagged protection immediately. Others need a lower-friction starting point. SonaSafe offers tagged, tagless and hybrid deployment models, so customers can start with the model that fits today and scale to higher-confidence protection as the site, workforce or risk profile changes.

09

What proof, pilot criteria and post-pilot reporting are provided?

A safety system should be proven in the customer's own environment before wider rollout. SonaSafe uses a pilot-led approach to assess site risk, configure the system, validate performance and report on outcomes. This helps customers make decisions based on evidence, not assumptions.

10

What local support, training and escalation model is available?

Technology performance depends on proper setup, training and support. SonaSafe works through trained partners and SonaSafe-led technical escalation so customers have a clear support pathway from assessment through pilot, rollout and ongoing use.

11 Does “maintenance-free” mean reliable – or simply unmonitored?

A safety system that is not monitored can fail silently. Ask whether devices are actively monitored, whether faults or damage can be detected early, and who is notified when something needs attention. SonaSafe supports remote device monitoring and diagnostics so issues can be identified earlier and system performance can be maintained.

12 Does it support both vehicle-to-pedestrian and vehicle-to-vehicle collision avoidance?

Forklift and mobile plant risk is not limited to pedestrians. Vehicles also operate around other vehicles, equipment, racking, stock and site assets. SonaSafe is designed to support both vehicle-to-pedestrian and vehicle-to-vehicle collision avoidance, helping protect people, plant and property.

13 What is the 5-year cost of ownership compared with the cost of inaction?

A cheaper system may cost less upfront, but still leave the business exposed. Compare the full 5-year cost – hardware, installation, software, support, training and maintenance – with the cost of inaction, including claims, downtime, investigations, insurance impact and regulatory exposure. SonaSafe supports this through pilot data, reporting and an ROI / business case approach.

14 Where does the system sit in the hierarchy of controls – warning, administrative control or engineered intervention?

Not every safety system plays the same role. Some systems provide footage, alarms or training data, which can be useful but still rely on people reacting correctly every time. SonaSafe is designed to support an engineered control approach through real-time alerts, configurable risk zones and, where technically available, vehicle speed reduction or intervention controls.

15 What happens if a worker, contractor or visitor is not wearing a tag?

Tag-based detection can provide high-confidence protection, but only when the right people are wearing tags. SonaSafe avoids forcing one model across the whole site by offering Tagged, Tagless and Hybrid deployment. Tagless AI camera-based awareness can support areas where wearable compliance is difficult, while Tagged or Hybrid can be used where higher-confidence protection is required.

16

How much day-to-day administration does the system create?

Some safety systems create ongoing work around issuing tags, charging devices, replacing units, checking compliance and training new workers. SonaSafe uses the site assessment to decide where tags are worth the additional control, and where tagless awareness or hybrid deployment may reduce day-to-day administration. The aim is to fit the safety model to the way the site actually operates.

17

Can it tell the difference between people, objects and site assets?

Alerts become less useful when systems react to every object as if it were a person. In Tagged and Hybrid deployments, SonaSafe uses wearable identification to help distinguish people from static objects such as pallets, racking and bollards. In Tagless areas, AI camera-based detection supports pedestrian awareness where visibility conditions are suitable. This helps improve alert relevance and operator trust.