

SAFETY ALERT

Worker loses leg in fall

INCIDENT

A mine worker suffered serious injuries, including loss of his leg after falling about 14 metres from an elevated front end loader bucket positioned within a mine shaft.

CIRCUMSTANCES

Workers were attempting to calibrate load cells associated with a hoisting shaft loading station, near the bottom of a hoisting shaft.

A steel framed basket containing weights was placed into a front end loader bucket. The basket was unrestrained and overhanging the front lip of the bucket.

Two workers wearing full body harnesses were positioned either side of the basket. Each harness was attached to the loader bucket by a rope lanyard.

The worker who fell was attempting to attach slings from the basket onto chains that had earlier been hung from a weigh flask.

The front end loader was stationary but while raising and levelling the bucket it seems that a movement of the bucket caused the basket to fall.

One of the workers also fell from the bucket but his rope lanyard failed and he fell to the bottom of the shaft.

It is highly likely that the professional and quick response by the mine's rescue team saved the worker's life.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Review current practices and:-

1. Prohibit people from working in the bucket of a front end loader or other similar apparatus.
2. When working at heights:
 - Ensure compliance with the provisions of the *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011* (WHSR) Part 4.4 Falls.

- Consider the Model Code of Practice - *Managing the Risk of Falls at Workplaces*. See <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au>
- Include in your 'fall from height' protocols provision for training and instruction in fit for purpose equipment to ensure it is properly stored, tested, maintained and discarded where appropriate.

3. When lifting people

- Ensure compliance with the provisions of clause 219 and clause 220 of the WHSR, in particular that the persons are lifted or suspended in a work box.
- Use fit for purpose elevated work platforms with consideration to AS 2550, AS 1418.10 and the recommendation in Safety Alert [SA08-09 Workers injured on work platform attached to load haul dump](#)
Note: elevated work platforms manufactured after 1 Dec 2003 must be design registered. See Schedule 5 of the WHSR.

4. When meeting your obligations under Part 3.1 WHSR, ensure

- Risk control measures are implemented in accordance with the hierarchy of controls.
- Safe systems of work are:
 - developed through competent people
 - developed through effective consultation
 - effectively communicated
 - consistent with established methodologies - refer to *Risk Management Standard AS/NZS ISO 31000*

5. In accordance with clause 37 and clause 38 of the WHSR, ensure competent people are involved in reviewing the adequacy and maintenance of risk controls.

NOTE: Please ensure all relevant people in your organisation receive a copy of this Safety Alert, and are informed of its content and recommendations. This Safety Alert should be processed in a systematic manner through the mine's information and communication process. It should also be placed on the mine's notice board.

Signed



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