



SAFETY ALERT

Worker crushed by sliding backhoe

INCIDENT:

A worker received severe bruising to the lower back and hip when he was crushed between a handrail and steel structure by a backhoe loader.

CIRCUMSTANCES:

Workers were attempting to lift a steel floor plate into position with the aid of a backhoe loader. The backhoe was positioned on a 1-in-4.7 slope entry to a sump containing water and coal fines.

When the backhoe driver deployed the stabiliser jacks, the machine began to slide down the slope towards the other workers. The boom on the backhoe forced the handrail onto a worker, entrapping him and causing injuries. Evasive action by the backhoe operator averted a more serious outcome.



Photos: The backhoe loader involved in the incident (above left), and the backhoe boom (above right).

INVESTIGATION:

The incident has been investigated by the NSW DPI Investigation Unit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Where earth moving equipment (eg backhoes, front end loaders, excavators, telescopic handlers, tool carriers and other similar units) have been selected to act as a crane for the purpose of raising, lowering or transporting loads, the requirements of AS 1418.8-2002 *Cranes, hoists and winches Part 8: Special purpose appliances* should be reviewed and considered as part of the risk assessment to select plant to undertake the tasks of lifting and/or transporting loads.

Work that is intended to be carried out using this type of equipment should be subject to risk assessment and the development of written safe work procedures.

Risk assessment and safe work procedures should result in the most appropriate machine being selected for the task, and should identify all safeguards to ensure that no person is placed in a position around the machinery where they may be injured.

Particular considerations include, but are not limited to:

- suitability of the equipment to operate on a slope
- ground conditions where the machine is to operate
- testing of machine stability prior to lifting
- positioning of observers and bystanders
- use of tag lines for controlling the load
- the evaluation of the stabiliser foot pad material to ensure the foot pads are the correct type for the ground conditions being encountered.

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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NSW DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES