



Significant Incident Summary No. 10

Worker crushed while operating a side-loader trailer

Background

A transport worker sustained serious crush injuries after unloading a sea container from a side-loader trailer.

When the trailer was unloaded, the worker walked around the sea container removing the twist-lock lifting chains. One of the lifting chains did not completely release from the container's twist-lock point.

The worker then stood between the sea container and the trailer and began retracting the side-loader cranes using the remote. The sea container was dragged toward the trailer by the connected lifting chain, crushing the worker between the sea container and trailer.

Contributory factors

WorkSafe's investigation into this incident identified:

- this type of incident was rare, if not unprecedented, and the crush hazard had not been identified
- the specific risk had not been assessed
- an absence of a safe system of work for the activity
- an exclusion zone was not in place while operating the side-loader
- deficient training provided to workers on the operation of side-loaders.

Recommendations

A person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) must ensure the health and safety of workers, so far as is reasonably practicable.

To reduce the likelihood of future incidents of this nature, PCBUs must ensure that:

- hazards and risks associated with the work activity are identified, including all crush points associated with the work activity
- a safe system of work is developed for the work activity, including implementation of exclusion zones and appropriate positions for workers at different stages of side-loader operation
- workers are provided with information, training, instruction and supervision in relation to the work activity and safe systems of work.

References and further information

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

- [TLID3046A Operate container side lifter](#)