

WSHAlert

2 June 2017

Worker fatally injured after falling from truck

On 3 May 2017, a worker was unloading goods from a truck. He was standing on the tailgate when some wheeled cages packed with goods on the truck rolled towards him. As the worker was trying to stop the moving cages, he fell off the tailgate and hit his head on the ground. The worker was conveyed to the hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.



Figures (left to right): Rear view of the truck from which the worker fell. Wheeled cage used for transporting cargo.

Recommendations

Persons in control of similar workplaces and work activities such as occupiers and employers are advised to consider the following risk control measures to prevent similar accidents:

Equipment

- Vehicle should have adequate anchorage points to tie down a cargo with the appropriate securing devices (e.g., straps, lashing belts, and restraining bars).
- Both anchorage points and the securing devices should be strong enough for the type of cargo to be transported, and an adequate number of restraining devices should be used.
- Material handling equipment with wheels (e.g., trolleys, carts, and wheeled-cages etc.) should also come with wheel-locks.
- Inspect equipment (i.e., restraining devices, trolleys and carts) regularly for defects. Faulty equipment must be repaired or replaced before use.

Restraint methods

- Secure cargo with a combination of lashing and blocking methods to prevent movement during all foreseeable conditions of transportation.
- Lash cargo directly to lashing points or loop lashing belts around the cargo to prevent movement in a specific direction. It also prevents cargo from toppling over.
- Wheel-locks should always be locked at all times to prevent free movement, except when workers need to load, unload or move them.

Risk Assessment

Conduct a thorough Risk Assessment (RA) for all work activities to manage any foreseeable risk that may arise during logistic operations. The RA should cover but not limited to the following area:

- Loading / unloading on sloping ground
As far as it is practicable, cargo must be loaded / unloaded on a flat and even ground. A cargo, on a slope, is highly likely to topple or move freely once the restraints are released. Whenever cargo is loaded/unloaded on a slope or an uneven ground, additional restraining devices should be used.

Further Information

1. Workplace Safety and Health Act
2. Workplace Safety and Health (Risk Management) Regulations
3. Workplace Safety and Health (General Provisions) Regulations
4. Approved Code of Practice on Workplace Safety and Health Risk Management
5. Workplace Safety and Health Guidelines on Safe Loading on Vehicles

*Information on the accident is based on preliminary investigations by the Ministry of Manpower as at 16 May 2017. This may be subject to change as investigations are still on-going. Please note that the information provided here is not exhaustive and for the benefit of enhancing workplace safety and health so that a recurrence may be prevented. The information provided is not to be construed as implying any liability to any party nor should it be taken to encapsulate all the responsibilities and obligations under the law.

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