

27/11/2019

Hydraulic Failure - Fatality

5 November 2019

Incident overview

A 55-year-old truck driver sustained fatal injuries after being crushed by a hydraulic powered ramp on a trailer connected to the prime mover he was driving. The incident occurred as the truck driver was attempting to unload two vehicles from the trailer in an industrial area in Ingleburn. After removing the safety chains from the ramps, one of the ramps has fallen, fatally crushing the driver.



Photograph 1: Ramp involved in the incident

The investigation

- SafeWork NSW inspectors responded to the incident.
- SafeWork NSW commenced an investigation to determine the cause and circumstances of the incident.

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Safety Information

Businesses are reminded of their duty to identify hazards and manage risks to health and safety in accordance with the provisions of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) and [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017](#).

Businesses must implement 'reasonably practicable' control measures to manage the risks associated with hydraulic systems:

Always assume a loading ramp can fall on a person at any time unless properly secured by a restraint device. Never rely on the trailer hydraulics or other lowering devices to prevent a ramp from falling.

Persons involved in the operation and maintenance of loading ramps on trailers must ensure:

- Persons undertaking the lowering and raising of loading ramps have received adequate information and training and are supervised to the extent necessary for safe operation.
- Appropriate pre-start checks of trailers are conducted, including a visual inspection of the hydraulic system and where practicable, test the operation of the hydraulic system.
- Effective control measures are put in place to prevent workers and/or members of the public being in the 'swing arc' area when ramps are being lowered or raised, or when the ramps are in the raised position but not secured.
- Procedures to deal with hydraulic system malfunctions, loss of hydraulic oil, hydraulic oil leaks, damage to hydraulics or structural failures are in place and followed.
- Ramps are used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Ramps and their ancillary equipment are regularly inspected and maintained by a competent person.
- Clearly visible signs at the rear of the vehicle warning people to remain clear of ramps at all times help to highlight the risk.
- Workers should never stand or move past where they could be struck by a falling ramp.

Further information

You can also refer to the following guidance materials:

- [Code of Practice – Managing the risks of plant in the workplace](#)
- [Hydraulics safety information](#) – WorkCover Queensland
- [Truck and trailer ramps - WorkCover Queensland](#)