



Significant Incident Report No. 211

Subject: Freight truck driver injured in fall from trailer

Date: 16 December 2014

Summary of incident

Two freight truck drivers were delivering rolls of 100 mm diameter poly pipe to a mine. Each roll weighed more than 300 kg. The rolls were strapped together in packs of five and had been loaded in three separate packs, standing upright on the trailer deck.

After releasing the restraints holding the packs on the trailer, the two drivers and site store person decided to release the straps binding the packs so the rolls could be unloaded individually.

One driver entered a pack of five rolls to release the two binding straps but was unable to release the ratchet on one strap. The second driver, who was standing on the ground beside the trailer, used a knife to cut that strap while the first driver was still inside the pack.

The pack separated and the rolls fell. Two rolls fell off the trailer. The middle roll landed half on the trailer. The remaining two rolls landed partly on the middle roll and partly on the trailer deck. The uppermost roll slid off the trailer on the other side, dragging the driver with it.

The driver fell to the ground, landing on his head and shoulder. He received a compound leg fracture.



Rolls of poly pipe that fell after the pack's binding strap was cut. The driver fell to the right side of the trailer after being caught in a sliding roll. Note the intact packs of poly pipe rolls at back of trailer showing the arrangement of restraints

Direct causes

- There was uncontrolled movement of the rolls of poly pipe when the pack's strap was cut.
- The truck driver was positioned inside the pack when the poly pipe rolls moved.
- The truck driver was working at height without fall protection.

Contributory causes

- Although a site procedure was available for loading and unloading, the hazard of stored energy and the need to undertake a job-specific risk assessment were not recognised.
- The store person and truck drivers had not unloaded packs of poly pipe rolls of this size at the site before.
- The method and equipment required to safely unload the pipe packs from the trailer had not been communicated to the truck drivers or store person.
- The binding strap ratchet could only be operated by a person standing inside the pack.
- The style of binding strap ratchet was unfamiliar to the truck drivers.

Actions required

Mine operators and supervisors are reminded of the importance of maintaining safe work procedures for handling large, heavy or awkward items of freight, including when working at height. Recommended actions include:

- ensuring personnel loading and unloading freight understand the hazard of stored energy and have the information, equipment and training necessary to handle freight safely
- reviewing site freight unloading procedures and adequacy of risk management controls, including the need for specific risk assessments where job parameters have changed.

Further information

Visit www.dmp.wa.gov.au/ResourcesSafety for information on occupational safety and health in the resources sector, including the following safety alerts relating to loading and unloading activities:

- Mines Safety Significant Incident Report No. 206 *Forklift struck by truck while unloading*
- Mines Safety Significant Incident Report No. 112 *Loading service vehicle onto trailer*
- Mines Safety Bulletin No. 48 *Unloading service vehicles on minesites*
- Mines Safety Bulletin No. 11 *Forklifts – access ramps to road haulage trucks*

This Significant Incident Report was approved for release by the State Mining Engineer on 16 December 2014