

# Safety and health alert

## 06/95 Tractor driver killed by dislodged hay bale

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### Incident

A retired truck driver was fatally injured while collecting round hay bales on a neighbour's farm, operating a Massey-Ferguson Model 702 tractor-powered front end loader with a modified bucket attachment fitted to the lifting frame assembly.

While the lifting assembly was in a raised position, a round bale of hay weighing approximately 300 kg was dislodged from the bucket attachment and fell rearward onto the operator, crushing his chest.

### Factors

- The tractor was carrying the round hay bale in the front bucket fitted with tines. This device was not suitable for carrying round hay bales at height, and the load was unsecured and unstable.
- The load was more than two metres above the ground and the bucket tilted back, an unstable method of carrying hay bales with which the load could easily be dislodged, exposing the driver to the risk of the hay bale falling on him.
- The pivot pins of the bucket were well worn, allowing the lifting frame to move excessively and exposing the load to unsafe movement.
- The tractor was not fitted with a Fall On Protective Structure (FOPS).

### Recommendations

1. Round hay bales should be carried close to the ground.
2. Hay bales should be secured when lifted above the machine operator, where possible. Considerable care is required when lifting unsecured hay bales to ensure they are not dislodged.
3. Where objects may fall on a tractor operator, Fall On Protective Structure (FOPS) should be fitted.

### Further Information

Further information can be obtained from the WorkSafe internet site [www.worksafe.wa.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au), or by contacting customer service on 1300 307 877 or email: [safety@docep.wa.gov.au](mailto:safety@docep.wa.gov.au).

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