

# Safety and health alert

## 10/97 Automatic security gates

---

### Incident

On 7 March 1997 a seven-year-old schoolgirl received serious head injuries and was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit at Princess Margaret Hospital for Children when a security/entrance gate fell on her.

The centre closing twin security gates were installed by the fabricator to the entrance portico of a townhouse development in preparation for connection of the automatic control operating system (electric motors, gear racks). The steel gates, weighing in excess of 80kg each, were mounted on rollers that fit onto a ground track. Top restraining or guide rollers hold the gate vertical and allow the gates to glide with ease.

As the control system which would normally restrain the gates was yet to be installed, stops ends to prevent the gates coming free of the guides were not fitted.

The incident occurred when the right side gate was pushed to the closed position by the young girl. The gate rolled along the ground track and came free of the top restraining rollers.

### Factors

Factors that contributed to one of the gates falling was:

- they were not prevented from rolling along the ground track or padlocked in the open or closed position;
- they were only held in the vertical position by rollers at each pier either side of the opening; and
- the non-existence of the automatic control operating system to limit movement along the ground track.

### Recommendations

1. Owners, occupiers or persons in control of premises where automatic security gates are being installed, maintained or repaired must ensure the gates are secured at all times. Do not totally rely on the fabricator or repairer to leave their work in a safe condition.
2. Persons engaged in the installation or repair of security gates must ensure their work is left in a safe state.

This incident is the subject of prosecution action under the *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984*.

### 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)

