

# Safety and health alert

## 14/97 Worker crushed by moving plant

### Incident

A female contract cleaner working at Waroona in August 1997 suffered internal injuries and lost consciousness when crushed by a conveyor system. The conveyor was moving about two metres a minute and pinned the worker against a chute.

### Factors

Factors that contributed to this accident included:

- The stainless steel chute, directing product off the conveyor system (pork viscera table) was being cleaned while the conveyor was in motion;
- The contract cleaning company did not lock out the conveyor system prior to cleaning;
- The abattoir had a lock out procedure for this plant, but had not told the contractor about the procedure;
- Guarding of the conveyor system around the chute was inadequate and was subsequently modified;
- Training of staff undertaking this cleaning work was inadequate; and
- Cleaning staff were inadequately supervised, in that they were permitted to clean in and around moving plant.

### Recommendations

1. Persons who have, to any extent, control of a workplace have an obligation under [Section 22](#) of the [Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984](#), to ensure persons within their workplace are not exposed to hazards.
2. Employers, main contractors and self-employed persons involved with the use, maintenance or cleaning of plant must comply with [regulation 4.37](#) of the [Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996](#).
3. Australian Standard 4024.1 – 1996, Safe Guarding of Machinery provided advice on approaches that might be considered to ensure plant is safe when used and when cleaning or maintenance is required.
4. If the guarding of any moving plant does not eliminate the risk of entanglement, an alternative safe system of work must be provided. In this case lock out procedures should have been used, while selected elements of the system were cleaned.
5. If lock out procedures are to be used, all involved must be informed of the procedures. Further, the system must be robust enough to ensure the plant can not be re-started by another person whilst the system is in this mode.



6.

## 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).

Date: October 1997

A414293

