

Safety and health alert

15/00 Truck driver falls five metres accessing transfer auger chute

Incident

A truck driver was seriously injured earlier this year when he fell 5 metres from a steel girder of a feed mill wall on to a concrete floor. He was assisting the mill foreman shut the slide flap of a transfer auger feed chute when he fell and broke his back.

The mill foreman had opened the flap (which was controlled by a pneumatic ram), to load feed into the injured driver's truck. The flap stuck in the open position causing the grain to spill over.

During his attempt to help correct the situation, the truck driver climbed onto a walkway above the truck and up the sidewall of the building to access the flap. He attempted to shut the flap by hanging on to one of the steel girders whilst he stretched out and tried to slide the flap with his right foot, but lost his balance and fell to the ground.

Factors

There was no safe means of fixed access to the slide flap of the transfer auger chute for maintenance or repair purposes.

The injured person was not wearing a safety harness when he climbed to a considerable height to access the flap.

Recommendations

Plant when available for operation be provided with safe means of access for the purpose of adjustment, cleaning, maintenance or repair.

Supervisors not allow employees to undertake unsafe work practices.

Employees not undertake unsafe work practices when performing their duties.

During induction, employees be informed of their obligations (under Section 20 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984) not to place themselves at risk of injury or harm.

Further Information

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

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