

# Safety and health alert

## 22/00 Young worker injured by power press

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### Incident

A young worker at a sheet metal factory in Bentley received injuries to his left hand whilst carrying out maintenance work on a 100 ton power press. The young worker was directed to replace damaged bolts from the press block. As the damaged bolts were removed, the press block weighing an estimated 100kgs detached from the hydraulic ram and trapped the worker's hand resulting in severe fractures.

### Factors

- The company failed to ensure that a safe system of work, that included measures to prevent the die block from falling, was employed during this potentially hazardous maintenance work.
- The young worker had received instruction on the operation of the press, but was not trained to conduct maintenance or die setting work.
- The young worker was not made fully aware that several of the bolts were broken prior to the commencement of the work he was directed to carry out.
- The company failed to provide adequate supervision to a young employee being required to conduct potentially hazardous specialised work.

### Recommendations

- Safe systems of work, must be provided and maintained for maintenance work on plant and machinery.
- Employers must ensure that only competent persons conduct specialised maintenance work on plant and machinery such as power presses.
- Appropriate instruction, training and supervision must be provided for young workers to ensure they are competent to undertake all tasks required of them at the workplace.
- Should employers and employees require further information regarding safe working on power presses they should refer to WorkSafe Western Australia's "**Toolbox Topics-Power Presses**" which can be found on the department's internet site at [www.safetyline.wa.gov.au](http://www.safetyline.wa.gov.au)
- Employers should also refer to the Western Australian Code of Practice titled "**The Safety and Health of Children and Young People in the Workplace**" which can also be found on the department's internet site.

### 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). A414472 Date: June 2000

