

9/07 Articulated tractor crane

Incident

An articulated tractor crane operator sustained life-threatening injuries while moving the tractor crane into a position where he could crane-lift the dolly of a flat-top tray to connect to the truck prime mover. The operator was standing on the ground adjacent to the left rear wheel when he engaged the gear stick into reverse to move the articulated tractor crane into position. When he attempted to move the gear stick into neutral, he errantly engaged a forward gear, causing the tractor to suddenly move forward. Consequently, the rear wheel ran over the left side of his body, causing serious crush injuries.

Factors to consider

- Persons are at risk when tractors or any mobile plant gears are operated from the ground while the engine is running.
- Operators of tractors or any mobile plant are exposed to a risk of injury if they move out of the normal operating position while the plant engine is running.

Recommendations

1. Always conduct a risk assessment before commencing a new task. The risk assessment should ensure that the plant to be used is suitable for the task and within the manufacturer's safe operating guidelines.
2. Persons should not engage the gears of tractors or any mobile plant from the ground while the engine is running.
3. Operators of tractors or any mobile plant should not alight from the operator's seated position while the plant's engine is running unless the engine gears are in neutral and the park brake is applied.
4. Plant operators should consult the manufacturer's recommended safe operation procedures.

Further information

- Powered Mobile Plant, A guide for employers, self employed persons and employees, Commission for Occupational Safety & Health.
- Safe Movement of Vehicles at Workplaces, Guidance Note, Commission for Occupational Safety & Health.

Further information can be obtained from WorkSafe's 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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