

# Safety and health alert

## 04/94 Fatal accident involving transportable homes

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### Incident

On 16 March 1994, two men, one a truck driver, the other an escort driver had transported a house structure to a farm near Mullewa.

The house was lifted off the vehicle using 4 hydraulic jacks, the vehicle was then driven out. The two men went underneath the house to dig the permanent stump holes and place the stumps which would finally support the house.

At this point the house fell to the ground fatally injuring the truck driver and trapping the escort driver beneath.

### Factors

1. Hydraulic jacks were placed on sand without any bearers to the base plates;
2. Hydraulic jacks were extended 900mm yet no attempt was made to laterally restrain the load;
3. The jack head was 110mm diameter yet it received its load directly from a 75mm wide metal channel member;
4. The metal jack head received its load direct from a metal channel member and hence was prone to slippage due to any lateral forces and is prone to lateral movement due to the relatively low co-efficient of friction;
5. Prior to workers going under the house no large stable back up packing was provided to guard against injury to workers in the event of a collapse.

**Note:** At the time of publication the testing of the jacking system had not been completed.

### Recommendations

1. Employers must never allow personnel to work or pass under a jacked load until the load is secured by blocking and wedging or other equivalent means.
2. When loads are jacked it is essential to ensure they remain laterally stable at all times.
3. Employers must ensure adequate systems of work, information, instruction, training and supervision is provided to all employees in the placing and moving of portable structures.
4. Jacking systems and ancillary equipment shall be certified by a competent engineer.



5.

***N.B. Similar structures being placed by crane require certified crane driver, dogman and registered crane.***

#### **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: May 1994

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