

Safety and health alert

04/99 Tilt-up panel falls over

Incident

In September 1998 a 5.5 tonne concrete tilt-up panel collapsed on a construction site. At the time the only means of support for the panel was by way of temporary bracing. This panel and eight others at the site had been erected approximately six (6) weeks prior. There was no other means of support for the panels during this time.

At the time of falling over there was a strong west/south west wind. No persons were injured although a fatality or serious injuries could easily have resulted if workers were on site.

Factors

1. Relying on temporary bracing to support the concrete tilt-up panels for extended periods.
2. Lack of consideration of the effect of prevailing weather conditions.
3. The loosening of the fixing bolts by vibration or incorrect tightening.
4. No procedure to regularly check the temporary bracing and fixings for tightness and security.

Recommendations

1. Do not rely solely on temporary bracing to support concrete tilt-up panels for longer than is necessary.
2. Introduce procedures to regularly check temporary bracing and their fixings for tightness and security in accordance with clause 7.6 of Australian Standard AS 3850.1-1990 and the Certified Engineers advice.
3. Ensure the casting and erection of concrete tilt-up panels is in accordance with the relevant requirements of Australian Standards AS 3850.1-1990 and AS 3850.2-1990.

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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