

07/07 Grader operator fatality

Safety and health alert

Incident

A grader operator sustained fatal crush injuries when he attempted to access between a suspended grader moldboard (blade) and the rear tandem wheel tyre. The grader was parked and the moldboard had been moved into a suspended position ready to remove the damaged cutting edge of the moldboard.

It is apparent that the locking pin was either not engaged or only partially engaged into the locking pin hole located on the crossbar. The instrument panel light which illuminates when the locking pin is not engaged in the crossbar hole was not working, leaving the operator with nothing other than an unreliable visual check from the cab position to assess whether the locking pin was engaged or disengaged.

Factors to consider

- The locking pin warning indicator lights are working per the manufacturer's recommendations;
- Plant operator should not alight from the operator's position when the locking pin is not engaged in the crossbar; and
- Persons are at risk of injury when the moldboard is left in a suspended position without support.

Recommendations

1. Ensure that the locking pin indicator light on the instrument panel is operating (illuminated) when the locking pin is disengaged, or that there is a reliable visual check device.
2. Ensure the moldboard is on the ground or is supported before attempting to alight from the operator's position.
3. Ensure the moldboard is on the ground or is supported before carrying out maintenance on the blade or changing the cutting edge.
4. Ensure the "Operator's Manual" is available and is followed when operating powered mobile plant.

Further information

- A guide for employers, self-employed persons and employees - Powered Mobile Plant, Commission for Occupational Safety and 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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