

Safety and health alert

16/09 Workplace concrete floor gives way resulting in serious injury

Incident

An employee was attempting to raise a newly manufactured mining low loader trailer, weighing approximately 80 tonne, to enable a transport trailer to be driven underneath so the new trailer could be removed from the workshop. The employee used a heavy duty jacking system, various support stands and packing. During the lifting, the jacking system's base broke through the reinforced concrete floor of the workshop under the weight of the load resulting in the trailer falling back a distance of approximately 100mm onto the support stands catching and crushing the right hand of the employee between the trailer and one of the support stands. The employee suffered the loss of 3 fingers and the palm of his right hand.

Factors to consider

- The weight of the plant being manufactured.
- The integrity of the concrete and floor system in the workplace.
- At the time that the floor gave way, the employee's hand was under a load lifted by the jack alone.

Recommendations

Employers should ensure that:

1. floors of workshops, where heavy equipment is manufactured or manoeuvred, are designed, inspected and maintained, as required;
2. manufacturer's operating instructions, safe systems of work and appropriate procedures are available for and in use by employees when lifting or moving heavy plant; and
3. employees are provided with adequate training, instruction and supervision in the procedures, systems of work and safe operating instructions of all plant in their workplaces.

Further information

WorkSafe's internet site www.worksafe.wa.gov.au or customer service on 1300 307 877 or email safety@docep.wa.gov.au

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