

Safety and health alert

23/09 Dislodged wire rope sling

Incident

An unloaded steel wire rope sling dislodged from the ramshorn hook on the main block of a 150 tonne crawler crane, falling approximately 30m and striking an employee, causing fatal injuries.

While the crane was being manoeuvred to a lay-down location, the crane operator spragged to change direction, causing the sling to swing erratically and causing a sling to pass over the spring-loaded safety latch on the ramshorn hook, releasing the sling from the ramshorn hook.

The crane operator was preoccupied operating the crane and did not see the rigger in front of the crane directly under the hook load.

Contributing factors

- Operators of mobile plant often have severely restricted visibility of ground workers, particularly those close to the plant.
- The operator did not rely on the rigger to direct him while moving the crane.
- Severe crane side movements may cause slings to roll over the safety latch and be dislodged from the hook.

Recommendations

1. When chains or slings are not in use they should be removed from the hook to avoid accidental dislodgment.
2. As far as practicable, loads including slings are not to be suspended over or travel over a person.
3. Exclusion zones and/or spotters are to be used when manoeuvring a crane or jib with a load or slings on a hook over personnel.
4. Use a 'sling restraint device' if a sling or slings are to remain on the hook.

Further information

- Nationally approved assessment instrument for Dogging, National Standard for Licensing Persons Performing High Risk Work.

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@commerce.wa.gov.au

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