

6/10 Employee injured when fork tine carriage falls off forklift

Incident

An employee received numerous injuries when he was hit by a fork tine carriage which fell off a forklift. The forklift was being used to close a workshop sliding door that had come off its roller guide track.

Two employees were closing the workshop doors at the end of the day when one of the sliding doors came off its roller guide track. Another person came to assist them to lift the sliding door end back onto the guide track by hand, but it was too heavy. A forklift was then used to lift the door back onto its track. During the process the side shift function was used to move the sliding door back into position. An employee pushing the sliding door from the inside was hit by the falling fork tine carriage when it came away from the forklift.

Contributing factors

- The sliding door was difficult to move, was in need of repair and had been so for some time.
- The forklift side shift function was used outside its intended use and not in accordance with Australian Standard *AS 2359.2-1985 Industrial trucks - Operation* while an employee was in the vicinity of the raised tines.

Recommendations

1. Items of plant should be used only in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations and in accordance with guidance contained in operations manuals.
2. Forklift operators should operate forklifts and other mobile plant in accordance with training received for plant requiring high risk operator's licences.
3. Employers should ensure they are aware of specific information on the capabilities and limitations of items of plant and ensure that that information is provided to employees.
4. Action to repair any item of faulty equipment in a workplace should be a maintenance priority.

Further information

- Australian Standard AS 2359.2-1985 Industrial trucks - Operation.
- Commission for Occupational Safety and Health Guidance Note: Working Safely with Forklifts

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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Date: June 2010

