

# WSHAlert

19 May 2021, Ref 2122010

## Accident Advisory: Worker fell from cargo on trailer

Ref: [2021091](#) WSH Alert Accident Notification dated 10 February 2021

On 2 February 2021, a prime mover driver was standing on some steel bars on his trailer bed assisting a forklift operator to adjust a steel bundle when he fell about 2m to the ground. The injured driver was conveyed to the hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.



Re-enactment of accident scene.

## Recommendations

Stakeholders such as occupiers, employers and principals in control of similar workplaces and work activities are advised to consider and implement the following risk control measures to prevent similar accidents:

### Loading/Unloading plan

- Prior to loading/unloading, carry out a site-specific risk assessment and work out a safe loading plan on how the cargo should be loaded, secured, adjusted and unloaded.
- Consider other methods for loading/unloading (e.g. by using a lorry crane) which may be safer depending on site or cargo constraints.
- Should a crane be used to load/unload cargo, the responsible person must ensure that a lifting plan is established and implemented, and have the respective qualified personnel deployed.

### Safe cargo adjustment

- Should any cargo become dislodged, carry out the cargo adjustment only after:
  - an on-site situation-specific risk assessment has been conducted; and
  - a safe work method to carry out the cargo adjustment has been established.
- The safe work method for adjustment of cargo should consider the following factors (non-exhaustive):
  - Cargo characteristics such as its weight, shape and dimensions;

- Environmental constraints;
- Availability of equipment; and
- Availability of manpower.
- Ensure workers involved in the cargo adjustment are familiar with the safe work method prior to work commencement.
- Provide adequate on-site supervision to ensure proper adherence to the safe work method.

Note: Barring-off should not be carried out as it can lead to unexpected cargo movement. Barring-off is the process of using levers (e.g. metal bars) to lever cargo off the vehicle.

### **Preventing falls from load carrying platform of vehicles**

- Minimise the number of workers assigned to work on the load carrying platform of the vehicle.
- Provide proper method of access to and egress from the load carrying platform (e.g. via a ladder or steps affixed to the platform).
- Provide appropriate fall prevention measures (e.g. edge protection or travel restraint system) or fall protection measures (e.g. inflatable cushions appropriately placed around the load carrying platform) for workers assigned to work on the load carrying platform.

### **Safe working position**

- Instruct workers where they can position themselves during loading/unloading so that they do not fall and do not get struck by moving or falling cargo.
- Ensure that workers are not standing on or next to unstable cargo, especially while the cargo is in the process of being adjusted.

## **Risk Assessment**

Conduct a thorough Risk Assessment (RA) for all work activities to manage any foreseeable risk that may arise when workers are involved in loading/unloading of cargo. The RA should cover, but not limited to, the following areas:

- Selection of a safer method for cargo loading/ unloading (e.g. using a lorry crane);
- Safe work method for loading, unloading and adjustment of cargo;
- Necessity for workers to work on the load carrying platform of vehicles;
- Availability of fall prevention and protection measures for workers working on the load carrying platform; and
- Working positions that workers should adopt during loading, unloading and adjustment of cargo.

## **Further Information**

1. Workplace Safety and Health Act
2. Workplace Safety and Health (Risk Management) Regulations
3. Code of Practice on Workplace Safety and Health Risk Management
4. SS 663: 2020 Code of Practice for Safe Loading on Vehicles
5. Workplace Safety and Health Guidelines for Safe Loading on Vehicles
6. WSH Council's Case Studies for Logistics and Transport Industry
7. WSH Council's Training Slides on Safe Loading on Vehicles
8. WSH Council's Activity Based Checklist on Safe Loading of Materials
9. WSH Council's 6 Basic Workplace Safety and Health Rules for Loading on Vehicles
10. UK HSE's HSG 246 Safety in the Storage and Handling of Steel and other Metal Stock
11. UK National Association of Steel Services Best Practice Document for the Safe Delivery and Unloading of Steel Products

Information on the accident is based on preliminary investigations by the Ministry of Manpower as at 27 February 2021. This may be subject to change as investigations are still on-going. Please note that the recommendations provided here are not exhaustive and they are meant to enhance workplace safety and health so that a recurrence may be prevented. The information and recommendations provided are not to be construed as implying any liability on any party nor should it be taken to encapsulate all the responsibilities and obligations under the law.

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