

30
April
2022

WSH ALERT

FATAL ACCIDENT

Worker dies after falling from a ladder

On 21 April 2022, a worker suffered head injuries after falling about 1.2m from an A-frame ladder while trying to hang items to the top of a tentage. He passed away two days later.

The worker was wearing slippers when using the ladder, and the floor was wet from rain.



Location where worker was found.

Scene of the accident.

Recommendations

Unsafe use of ladders can result in serious injury or fatality. There was [another fatal accident](#) on 24 December 2021 involving a ladder. To prevent similar accidents, consider the following measures:

- **Select a good ladder:** Confirm the ladder is in good condition and of the correct height for the task. Do not use ladders that are damaged or contain loose or missing parts. The use of ladders certified to SS EN 131: 2019 is strongly recommended.
- **Safe ladder location:** Place the ladder on stable and flat ground.
- **Worker health:** Check that workers are fit for the task before starting work. Do not allow workers who are feeling unwell to get onto a ladder.
- **Safe ladder use:** Lock the spreaders before using an A-frame ladder. Maintain three points of contact when climbing up or down the ladder. Do not carry materials or tools as you climb. Never step on the top rung of the ladder.
- **No overreaching:** Overreaching can cause the ladder to become unstable. Instruct workers to keep their weight centred between the ladder's side rails at all times. Shift the ladder as necessary to avoid overreaching.
- **Personal protection:** Provide workers with anti-slip footwear. Equip workers with a safety helmet to protect against head injuries.

For more information, please refer to SS EN 131: 2019 Ladders, WSH Council's [Code of Practice for Working Safely at Heights](#), and WSH Council's [Ladder Safety Pack](#).

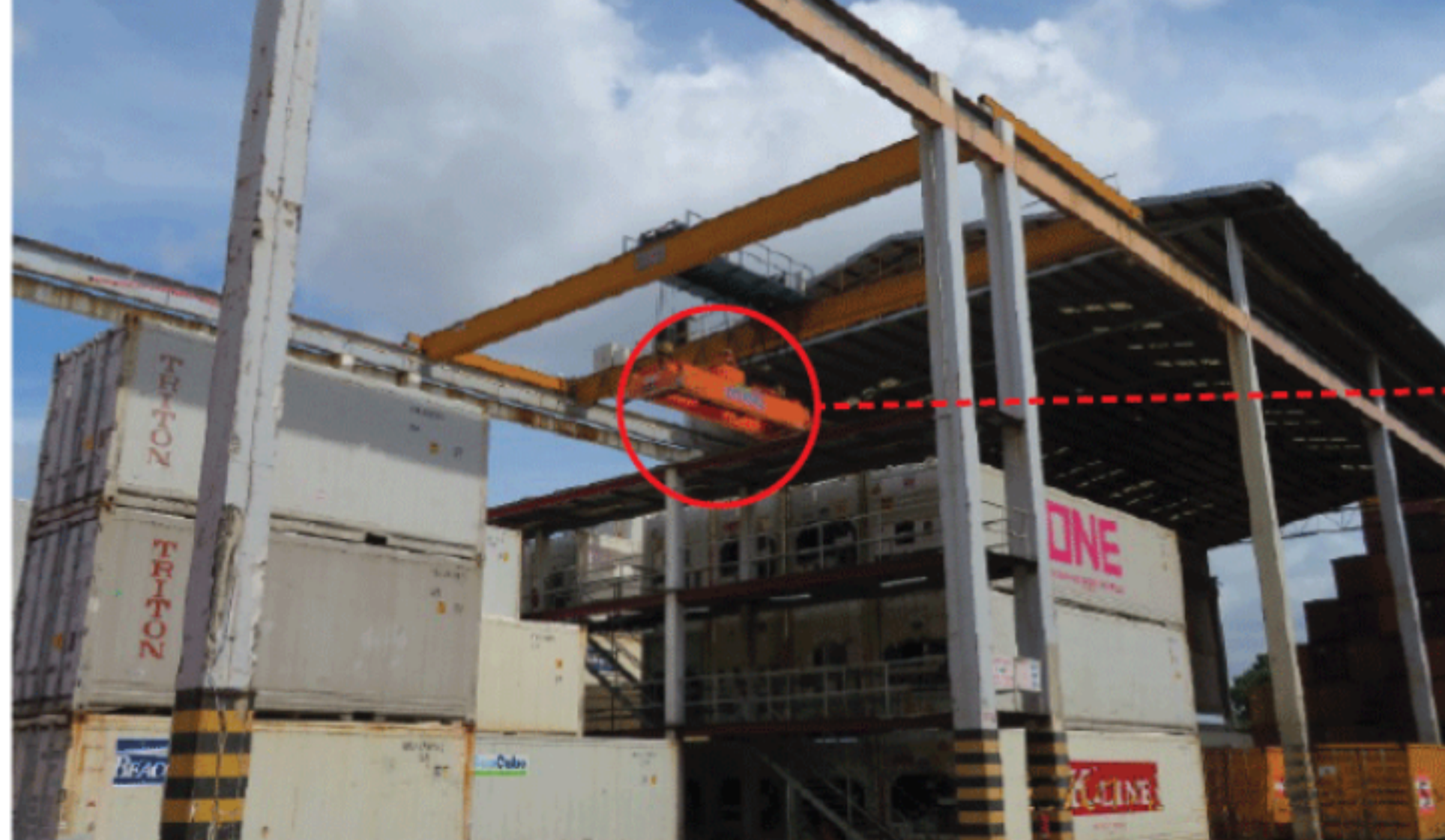
* Information on the accident is based on preliminary investigations by the Ministry of Manpower as at 27 April 2022. This may be subject to change as investigations are still on-going. Please also note that the recommendations provided here are not exhaustive and they are meant to enhance workplace safety and health so that a recurrence may be prevented. The information and recommendations provided are not to be construed as implying liability on any party nor should it be taken to encapsulate all the responsibilities and obligations under the law.

SERIOUS ACCIDENT/ INCIDENT

Workers injured when boom lift failed

Two technicians were in a boom lift platform repairing an overhead travelling crane, when the final telescopic section of the boom lift suddenly retracted and caused its platform to drop. Both technicians sustained minor injuries and have since been discharged from the hospital. They were harnessed and attached to anchorage points on the boom lift. They could have had more serious injuries if they were not anchored.

Investigations revealed that the mechanism in the final telescopic section of the boom was broken.



Overhead travelling crane that needed repair

Figure 1: Overview of accident scene.



Telescopic section of the boom lift

Figure 2: Boom lift involved in the accident.

Recommendations

Mobile Elevated Work Platforms (MEWPs), including boom lifts, can fail if not properly maintained. To prevent similar accidents, consider the following measures:

- **Mandatory examination and testing:** Ensure MEWPs are inspected by an Authorised Examiner as per statutory requirements (at least once every six months for lifting platforms used to carry workers). Never allow MEWPs to be used if its lifting platform certificate has expired.
- **Regular maintenance:** Implement a preventive maintenance programme for MEWPs according to the manufacturer's recommendations. Ensure that maintenance is carried out by competent personnel.
- **Authorised operator:** Ensure only authorised operators are allowed to operate the MEWP. Authorised operators must complete brand and model-specific familiarisation training before operating the MEWP.
- **Pre-use check:** Confirm that MEWPs are in good working condition and free of visible defects before starting work.

In addition, workers in boom lifts should wear harnesses secured to designated anchorage points.

For more information, please refer to SS 616: 2016 Code of Practice for Safe Use of Mobile Elevating Work Platforms, MOM's [Examination and Testing Requirements For Statutory Lifting Equipment](#) and WSH Council's [Code of Practice for Working Safely at Heights](#).

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Workplace injuries tend to rise around this time of the year. Remain vigilant against risks and prevent accidents.

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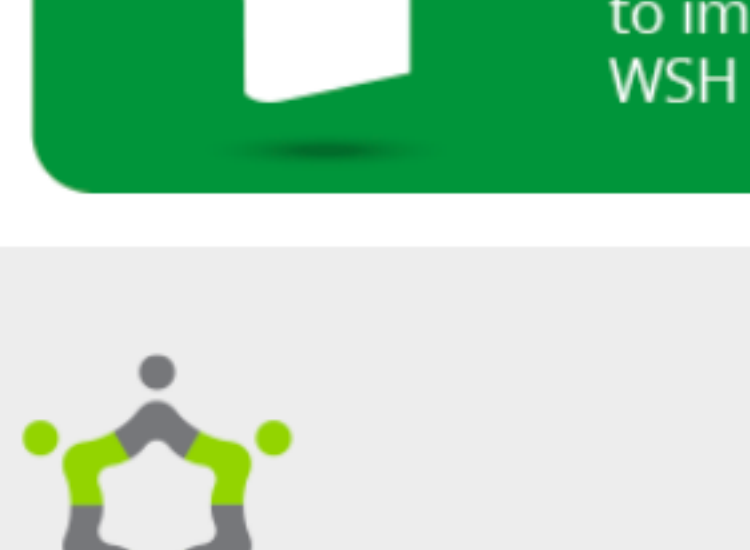
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