



## Worker crushed by falling gate

WorkSafe is investigating an incident in which a worker suffered serious crush injuries as a result of a large metal sliding gate falling on him.

The incident scene is shown in the photograph below. When the gate is closed, it is located in front of the grey roller door. At the time of the incident, the worker was opening the gate by manually sliding it to the right. The gate moved too far and travelled beyond the guides, allowing it to fall onto the worker and cause serious pelvic and leg fractures.

The gate was 5.4 metres long and 1.7 metres high. It was so heavy that the injured worker's colleague was unable to lift it.



WorkSafe has investigated similar incidents in the past. In 2005, a worker was injured by a falling gate at a factory in Kewdale. Also in 2005, a child was killed when a gate fell on her.

In 2009, a security guard at a transport yard was seriously injured when a gate fell on him. This incident led to the prosecution of the company in control of the workplace. This company was not the employer of the injured person, but the company that had had engaged the services of the security company.

**Regional Offices**

In 2015, a worker was preparing to paint a gate when it travelled too far and went beyond the guides and fell on him. There were two similar incidents in Western Australia in 2017. The first one caused ankle and facial fractures, the second incident resulted in fractured vertebrae.

In NSW in 2015, a worker suffered spinal injuries when a heavy gate fell on her. The employer involved was recently fined \$300,000 (see below).

### **Possible contributing factors in incidents of this type**

1. Employers and persons having control of the workplace (for example property owners and property managers) not identifying the potential hazards associated with large, heavy gates.
2. Gates not having an end stop to prevent the gate moving too far and travelling beyond the guides.
3. Failure to maintain the gate, the guides and end stop.
4. Failure to report damaged gates to the employer, property owner and/or property manager.

### **Managing hazards and risks**

- Check gates installed at the workplace to ensure that end stops and appropriate guides are fitted and are in good working order.
- Like any other equipment in the workplace, gates should be inspected regularly for any signs of damage.
- When an incident results in damage to a gate or when it is identified that a gate is not working correctly, the gate should be immediately tagged-out and the employer, property owner and/or property manager notified.
- Any damaged or defective gates should be immediately assessed and repaired by a competent person.
- Until such repairs are completed, measures must be implemented to keep people away from a damaged gate (for example temporary barricades, exclusion zones, warning signs).
- Property owners and managers should read *OSH for commercial property owners and property managers* (see the link below). This provides further information about their duties under the *Occupational Safety & Health Act 1984*.

### **Further information**

- SafeWork NSW - [Construction company fined over worker's spinal injuries](#)
- WorkSafe WA - [OSH for commercial property owners and property managers](#)

The above information is provided based on WorkSafe's preliminary investigation and further investigation is continuing.

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