



Employee fatally injured after falling from personal property stored at workplace

Background

An employee suffered a fatal head injury after falling from a colleague's private boat that was being stored at the workplace. The employee had climbed aboard the boat to have a look at it, when they lost their balance and fell to the ground. The owner of the boat had been given approval from management to temporarily store it at the workplace prior to the incident.

Possible contributing factors

- The potential to expose employees or others to hazards by storing personal property at the workplace. In this instance, these included a risk of:
 - falling for anyone who climbed aboard the boat
 - being crushed when manoeuvring the boat trailer
 - fire arising from petrol, oil, batteries and flares on the boat
 - obstruction to emergency ingress and egress routes and other emergency equipment
 - blind spots being created for those working or moving near the boat.
- The lack of systems, including policies or procedures, governing the storage or use of items of personal property at the workplace.
- The lack of risk management and implementation of control measures to reduce, so far as practicable, the risk of injury or harm to employees or other persons in relation to items of personal property being stored at the workplace.

Action required

Employers should ensure systems, such as policies and procedures, are in place to provide guidance about storing and using any items of personal property at the workplace, including:

1. clear instructions that items of personal property should not be stored or used at the workplace without prior approval
2. as part of the approval process, the identification of hazards and a risk assessment conducted in consultation with employees and elected safety and health representatives, where applicable
3. the implementation of control measures to reduce, so far as practicable, the risk of injury or harm to employees and others at the workplace, including:
 - consideration of where and how items may be stored (e.g. inside or outside, proximity to other goods or services, requirement for item to be covered or fenced off, etc.)
 - identification of whether or not employees or other persons are permitted to access or use the personal items, and if so, under what conditions.

Further information

Further information can be obtained from WorkSafe's [website](#), by contacting customer services on 1300 307 877 or email safety@dmirs.wa.gov.au.

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