



Safety alert 6/2009

Elevated work platform operator seriously injured

Incident

An abrasive blaster operating an elevated work platform (EWP) was working at height manoeuvring the basket of the machine within the framework of a large steel structure. During the manoeuvre the operator was seriously injured when he was trapped and crushed between the framework of the basket and a structural member.

Factors to consider

- This is the second such incident within recent months.
- EWP operators and occupants may be subject to collision hazards when the EWP is operating close to adjacent structures.
- When operating at height, the EWP response to hand control commands - including the release of joysticks - may involve considerable delays.
- To avoid collision hazards when working near adjacent structures, an operator must understand the function and response characteristics of all controls for the machine in use.
- Careful planning of tasks and good communication between operators and occupants are essential to avoid collision injuries.

Recommendations

1. EWP operators should avoid difficult-to-access locations within structures.
2. If an EWP is operated in a restricted location, the occupants should make themselves aware of their surroundings, plan work carefully and keep their body parts within the protection of the basket framework.
3. To prevent accidental activation of controls, the foot switch should never be overridden or depressed before the operator intends to use a control function.
4. When attempting to stop a movement quickly, the release of the foot switch may be faster than neutralising hand controls.
5. Before using an unfamiliar EWP, an operator must read and understand the operating manual.
6. All occupants of the basket should know what movements the operator intends.
7. EWP emergency planning should include response to possible entrapment.

Further information

- Manufacturers operating manuals
- AS2550.10-2006 Safe Use Mobile Elevating Work Platforms
- 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 A14041117

This Alert contains safety information following inquiries made by WorkSafe about an incident or unsafe practice. The information contained in this Alert does not necessarily include the outcome of WorkSafe's action with respect to an incident. WorkSafe does not warrant the information in this Alert is complete or up to date and does not accept any liability to any person for the information in this report or as to its use.