Fatal Incident – Contract Haulier

WHAT HAPPENED

An incident at an external customer's site resulted in the death of a driver. Two drivers, working for the same contract haulier, were delivering limestone dust on articulated tipping vehicles. On arrival at the site they were directed to the tipping area and both proceeded to tip together, in close proximity of each other.

One of the vehicles tipped over and crushed the cab of the second vehicle. It appears that a punctured tyre on the nearside rear of the trailer, combined with a slight gradient of the ground may have been sufficient to cause the vehicle to overturn. Tragically, the driver in the crushed cab died of his injuries at the incident scene.



Scene of the Incident

LEARNING POINTS / ACTIONS TAKEN

Both vehicles were loaded with dry dust by automated bin loader and were within their maximum payload. There is no suggestion that the material was unevenly loaded or stuck in the

material was unevenly loaded or stuck in the vehicle body, however this is often a factor in this type of incident:
- Are loads evenly distributed, particularly where high sided vehicles are loaded via face shovel? - Is consideration given to the potential for loads to stick / freeze in the trailers?
- Are checks made to ensure that vehicle capacities, including maximum axle weights are not exceeded?

Both drivers held an industry Driver Skills Card, and had received copies of safe tipping procedures that specify the need for exclusion zones around vehicles, however they tipped in close proximity:
- Have all drivers attended the required competency training?
- Are they trained in the safe operation of their vehicle, including the need to check there is a safety zone around their vehicle?
- Is compliance with safe systems of work monitored and enforced by supervisors?
- Is the fundamental requirement for exclusion zones around vehicles whilst tipping stressed to drivers and site staff?

There was no evidence of mechanical failure of the vehicles, however it appears that a puncture in one of the rear axle tyres, combined with the slight

gradient of the ground contributed to the roll over; there were comprehensive inspection and maintenance records for both vehicles:
- Are vehicles subject to rigorous inspection and maintenance schemes, including driver pre-start checks?

Uneven, soft or unsuitable tipping areas can contribute to vehicle overturns:
- Do our sites have effective traffic management plans in place with designated tipping areas and clear signage?
- Are tipping areas suitable for large goods vehicles e.g. firm and level?
- Are they away from other operations, or are other operations (such as loading shovel movements) suspended during tipping?
- Do we encourage employee and contract drivers to report concerns about delivery sites, making use of the Near Miss / Hazard Alert system?

Whilst there is no evidence that drivers were under undue pressure, rushed tipping has been a factor in previous vehicle overturns:
- Do we promote driver pay schemes that emphasise the need for safe practices and delivery, rather than just delivery, in case there are drivers inclined to take risks?
- Do safety inspections and tours include the monitoring of deliveries from time to time?

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The driver of the vehicle that overturned was not wearing his seat belt.:
- Is the requirement for seat belts to be worn at all times communicated to drivers, monitored and enforced?

The contract haulage company is included on the ‘Approved List’ of haulage contractors and had undergone an audit just over 12 months previously.
- Are health and safety requirements made clear in contractual terms and conditions and are contractors assessed before being included on an ‘Approved List’?
- Is the need for formal monitoring of standards assessed and appropriate monitoring schemes implemented?

The vehicles were not fitted with inclinometers to warn of potential roll over.
- Do risk assessments consider the need to fit inclinometers to vehicles as appropriate?

DRIVERS MUST STOP IF THEY FEEL ANY ACTIVITY IS UNSAFE.



Exclusion Zone Sign

LOCATION:	**COMPANY-WIDE**	**ALERT STATUS:**	**Normal**
ACTIVITY:	**TRANSPORT & LOGISTICS / DELIVERY**	**DATE ISSUED:**	**21/11/2011**
SUB ACTIVITY:	**PRODUCT DELIVERY**	**INCIDENT No:**	**00315**