Fatal 5 - Operator sustains finger injury after being trapped whilst assisting with the unloading of bags using a telehandler

WHAT HAPPENED

A telehandler operator was unloading a micro-silica delivery and transporting 1.2 tonne bulk bags. After 8 bags had been successfully off loaded and stored, the 9th bag fell off the pallet and onto the floor; each bag has four loops / straps, two of which got caught half underneath the bag.

The injured person saw what had happened and went over to help, he put the two top straps on the telehandler tyne, he then pulled on the two trapped straps and asked the telehandler operator to drive the forks through so that the bag could be stood up.

Image shows a bulk bag lifting loop.



During this process, the straps became taught, trapping the injured person's third finger on his left hand. As the pressure came on the injured person pulled his hand away, leaving his glove and the very end of his finger trapped under the strap, resulting in an open fracture of the bone.



Key Findings

- Incorrect route taken to transport load as regular route was blocked by other vehicle - image shows route
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- Unstable load was transported to storage area
- Take 5 training had recently been carried out
- Take 5 assessment had not been carried out for this non-routine task
- Communications between the forklift truck operator and colleague not effective
- Both employees are relatively new to the team

LEARNING POINTS / ACTIONS TAKEN

HOW COULD THIS HAVE BEEN AVOIDED

- Ensure loads are secure before attempting to transport them
- Only use suitable vehicle access routes
- Enforce exclusion zones around operational mobile equipment
- Stop & Think and Take 5 in event of unexpected circumstances

KEY REVIEW POINTS

- Are safe designated vehicle routes clearly identified and maintained?
- Do we use the “thumbs up” rule to ensure vehicle operators and pedestrians are aware of each other?
- Are exclusion zones enforced around operational mobile plant, particularly for those guiding vehicle movements?
- Are Safe Systems of Work in place and communicated effectively
- Is Take 5 used prior to doing non routine tasks?
- Do we ensure new team members are aware of the hazards and risks of their role through effective induction and regular ongoing training?

LOCATION:	**DEPOT**	**ALERT STATUS:**	**Normal**
ACTIVITY:	**LOADING AND UNLOADING**	**DATE ISSUED:**	**09/08/2023 19:55:29**
SUB ACTIVITY:	**NO SUB ACTIVITY AVAILABLE**	**INCIDENT No:**	**03658**