

Dumper Driver Crush Injuries

WHAT HAPPENED

A contract cleaner narrowly escaped serious injury when he lost control of the Thwaites, 2 Tonne, front tipping dumper he was driving and became trapped beneath a conveyor structure.

The experienced mobile plant driver had driven the dumper inside a building to assist a second team who were sweeping the first floor and were shovelling debris into a chute, discharging directly into the dumper skip, parked at the bottom.

The driver had transported one load of sweepings to a recycling point and was carrying out a three stage manoeuvre in the building to position the skip under the fixed chute. Whilst reversing he lost control of the vehicle, travelling further back than intended and became crushed between the dumper steering wheel and the casing of an inclined screw conveyor directly above him. He received injuries to his chest and knee.

The driver said that he could not stop the vehicle because the brakes had failed. Two independent engineers could not find any defects with the brakes or drive system.



Dumper Close Up

LEARNING POINTS / ACTIONS TAKEN

The vehicle roll over protection bar had been folded down to access the building but had not been put back up once inside: Whilst not designed to protect against this type of incident, in this case it would have prevented injury. Are drivers trained to return the roll bar to the correct position as soon as possible?

There was limited space to manoeuvre the dumper to position the skip under the chute: Do we consider methods of work that avoid the need to take vehicles inside buildings? Are specific risk assessments carried out and control measures applied for the use of vehicles inside buildings or in restricted spaces? Are teams trained in these assessments and are the controls enforced through supervision? Are vehicles suitable for use in buildings?

The driver was experienced and had recently completed refresher training in the use of the vehicle: however, he lost control of the vehicle in

an environment where he would have been expected to be exercising caution. Are regular driver assessments carried out to identify if driver behaviours demonstrate that competency standards are maintained? Is there sufficient Supervision to ensure work activities are undertaken safely at all times?

Daily checks had been carried out: Whilst not contributing to the incident, there were minor defects on the vehicle. Are there effective inspection and defect reporting procedures? Are there rules in place to guide supervisors to remove and prevent the use of defective vehicles?

LOCATION:	CEMENT PLANT	ALERT STATUS:	Normal
ACTIVITY:	MAINTENANCE & HOUSEKEEPING	DATE ISSUED:	18/02/2013
SUB ACTIVITY:	N/A	INCIDENT No:	00359