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Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety

WorkSafe Western Australia Mines Safety

Monthly incident insights

WorkSafe Mines Safety

January 2026 edition

Issued 20 February 2026

183 notifiable incidents in January

151 reportable incidents in January

4 notifiable incidents compared to December

13 reportable incidents compared to December

3 Three summarised incidents in this edition

Note: Correct as of 13 February 2026.

Report a notifiable incident to **1800 678 198**

Report all incidents online SRS – Safety Regulation System

Reportable incidents

Unsafe situation exposes worker to line-of-fire hazard

An unsafe situation exposed a maintenance worker—one of two workers assigned to the task—to a line-of-fire hazard while they were carrying out alternator repairs on mobile plant in a workshop.

The maintenance workers attended a pre-start meeting and completed a task-based risk assessment, identifying dangers that included manual handling, suspended loads and line-of-fire hazards. A forklift operator used their machine's tines to lift the front of the mobile plant. One of the maintenance workers positioned themselves partially beneath the suspended mobile plant while they attempted to install an axle stand. Another worker observed the unsafe situation, instructed the maintenance worker to move from beneath the suspended mobile plant

and notified a supervisor, who intervened immediately.

The supervisor assessed the situation and identified that the mobile plant didn't have adequate support. The team corrected the lifting arrangement by installing appropriately rated axle stands from a safe position and maintaining distance from the line of fire. They safely lowered the mobile plant onto the axle stands and removed the forklift.

Takeaways

- Avoid working beneath suspended loads. Workers must not position themselves beneath loads that approved equipment doesn't fully support.
- Use lifting equipment for its designed and approved purpose only.
- Secure vehicles with appropriately rated and correctly sized supports before undertaking work beneath them.
- Exercise dynamic risk management. Workers must continually assess risks, not just appraise them at pre-start meetings.
- Empower workers to stop and supervisors to intervene when they observe unsafe situations.

Summary

This incident reinforces the importance of strict line-of-fire controls during maintenance activities involving heavy equipment. Even when workers identify hazards in planning phases, unsafe situations can arise if they don't implement controls properly. Continuous supervision, correct equipment selection and a strong safety intervention culture are essential to prevent serious harm.

Haul truck dislodges from jacks during tyre change

A haul truck became dislodged from two hydraulic jacks—crushing one and knocking over the other—while two tyre fitters were removing and rotating tyres during a scheduled maintenance activity.

Two self-propelling hydraulic jacks—each rated to 181 tonnes—supported the haul truck's rear suspension

mounts. Using a tyre handler, the tyre fitters removed the haul truck's rear right tyres (positions 5 and 6) and started removing its rear left tyres (positions 3 and 4). While the tyre fitters were removing the haul truck's final rear left tyre (position 4), the vehicle became unstable and shifted to the right, dislodging from the hydraulic jacks and coming to rest on the ground. The haul truck crushed one hydraulic jack beneath its rear axle and knocked over the other.

Takeaways

- Consider load redistribution. Removing multiple tyres can significantly alter weight distribution and centre of gravity. Conduct stability checks at each stage of the process.
- Supplement hydraulic jacks with engineered secondary supports or mechanical locking systems, where practicable. Don't rely solely on hydraulic systems.
- Maintain exclusion zones. Ensuring that no workers were in the haul truck's footprint prevented any injuries from occurring.
- Plan staged removal activities. Develop and follow procedures that account for progressive imbalance during multi-tyre maintenance tasks.

Summary

Tyre maintenance on large mobile plant involves significant stored energy and changing load conditions. Even when using high-capacity equipment, the progressive removal of components can compromise stability. Robust engineering controls, staged risk assessment and strict exclusion zones are essential to prevent serious harm.

Dozer blade components crush worker's index finger

A dozer blade's cutting edge released suddenly and crushed a worker's index finger while they were performing a maintenance activity involving heavy components and lifting operations.

The worker was removing the left-hand centre cutting edge from the dozer blade. A crane was lifting the

dozer blade's cutting edge when it became stuck, with bolts still partially engaged in holes. The worker placed their hand beneath the end of the dozer blade's cutting edge as they attempted to lift the component clear of the bolts. The cutting edge released suddenly and dropped onto the dozer blade, crushing the worker's index finger between the components.

The worker received first aid at the site's medical facility. Following consultation with the company doctor, the worker went to the local hospital for precautionary X-rays due to the mechanism of injury. Hospital staff cleaned, sutured and splinted the worker's index finger. The company placed the worker on restricted duties, pending review.

Takeaways

- Keep hands clear of suspended or partially supported loads. Workers must not place body parts in pinch points or beneath components that may shift unexpectedly.
- Use appropriate tooling or mechanical methods to free stuck components. Don't rely on manual force.
- Identify stored energy and release hazards. Once freed, components under load or tension can release suddenly.
- Maintain exclusion zones during lifting activities. Ensure that all workers remain clear of potential drop zones and crush points.
- Reassess tasks when conditions change. If a lift doesn't proceed as planned, stop work and review the method before continuing.

Summary

Maintenance activities involving heavy components and lifting operations present significant crush and pinch hazards. Workers must avoid lines of fire and ensure they don't place body parts beneath suspended or unstable loads. If resistance or unexpected conditions arise, stop and reassess before proceeding.

More information

Working under vehicles and mobile plant

The central theme of this edition is the dangers of working under vehicles and mobile plant. All too frequently, WorkSafe investigates incidents in which such activities result in serious harm, particularly on mine sites. Published late last year, WorkSafe's Health and Safety Bulletin No. 22 provides educational information on this important topic.

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