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Department of Local Government,
Industry Regulation and Safety



Monthly incident insights

WorkSafe Mines Safety

June 2026 edition

Issued 21 July 2026

163 notifiable
incidents in
June

156 reportable
incidents in
June

 **21** notifiable
incidents
compared to
May

 **8** reportable
incidents
compared to
May

3

Three summarised incidents in this edition

Note: Correct as of 14 July 2026.

Report a notifiable incident to
1800 678 198

Report all incidents online
[SRS – Safety Regulation System](#)

Reportable incidents

Gearbox collapse highlights asset integrity risks

A 16-tonne gearbox collapsed from a stacker reclaimer during normal operations, damaging surrounding structures and starting a small fire. A worker extinguished the fire with a water hose and no injuries occurred.

The gearbox fell from its installed position onto the deck below, where personnel could access walkways beneath the equipment. Emergency response procedures isolated the plant and secured the area. Investigators found that a seized bearing left the gearbox unsupported, causing the drive torque arm to fail and the assembly to collapse.

The incident shows how failures in critical mechanical components can create dropped-object, structural

and line-of-fire hazards with the potential for serious or fatal consequences. It demonstrates the importance of asset integrity, condition monitoring and maintenance strategies that identify deteriorating components before they result in catastrophic equipment failure.



Takeaways

- **Maintain asset integrity:** Inspect and maintain critical mechanical components to identify deterioration before failure occurs.
- **Review condition monitoring:** Confirm monitoring systems can detect bearing degradation and other developing faults in critical drive equipment.
- **Manage dropped-object hazards:** Identify where falling equipment could strike workers and restrict access beneath elevated plant.
- **Investigate warning signs:** Examine abnormal vibration, temperature trends and other indicators of emerging defects.
- **Assess maintenance programs:** Review preventive maintenance strategies to ensure they remain effective as plant ages and operating conditions change.
- **Prepare for emergencies:** Implement response procedures that support rapid isolation of plant and control secondary hazards such as fire.

Dust contributes to stockpile edge breach

An excavator tipped over the edge of a stockpile during oversize material management activities, creating the potential for serious or fatal injuries. The

operator had completed a pre-start inspection and was repositioning the machine to access material on the stockpile.

As the operator aligned the excavator tracks, dust generated around the rock breaker intermittently reduced visibility and contributed to spatial disorientation. Believing the machine faced the stockpile, the excavator unknowingly approached the edge, lost ground support and tipped over, coming to rest on the boom and stick.

The incident shows how dust and reduced visibility can compromise operator awareness and expose workers to edge-breach and rollover hazards. It demonstrates how quickly routine earthmoving tasks can escalate when operators rely on visual references alone and controls do not prevent equipment from approaching stockpile edges.



Takeaways

- **Control edge-breach risks:** Install engineered controls such as geofencing, proximity alerts or lockout systems to prevent equipment reaching stockpile edges.
- **Improve visibility:** Apply dust suppression and provide adequate lighting to maintain clear visual reference points.

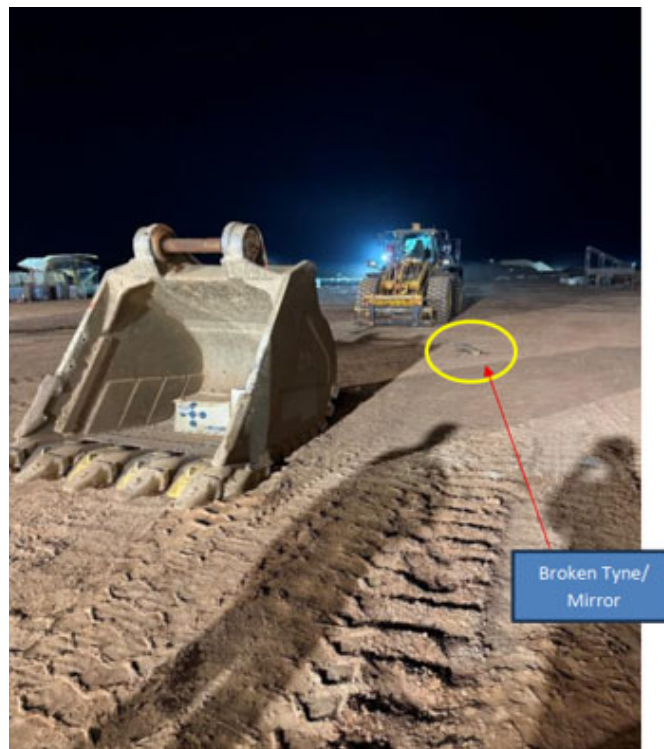
- **Define edges clearly:** Use bunds, windrows, markers or other physical controls to identify stockpile edges in active work areas.
- **Strengthen isolated-work controls:** Implement additional monitoring, supervision and fail-safe measures for night and lone-worker operations.
- **Reduce reliance on perception:** Use layered controls to manage foreseeable loss of visibility and spatial disorientation.
- **Verify risk controls:** Test and review edge protection, night-work and isolated-work controls through the mine safety management system.

Improvised lift causes fork failure

A wheel loader fork failed during an improvised lifting task, causing the broken section to recoil into the machine and creating the potential for serious or fatal injuries. A heavy diesel mechanic was repositioning an excavator bucket during maintenance activities.

Workers could not position both forks beneath the bucket, so they used a single fork to drag the load. As the loader operator attempted to move the bucket, the fork failed under load. The broken section recoiled towards the loader and struck the left-hand side of the machine, damaging the external mirror and ladder handrail. No injuries occurred.

The incident shows how using equipment outside its intended purpose can release stored energy and expose workers to line-of-fire hazards. It demonstrates how quickly routine maintenance tasks can escalate when workers adopt improvised methods and use plant beyond its design limits.



Right side view location of bucket, tyne, IT Loader

Takeaways

- **Use equipment as designed:** Follow manufacturer specifications and only use plant and attachments for their intended purpose.
- **Select suitable equipment:** Choose lifting and handling equipment that matches the weight, size and configuration of the load.
- **Avoid improvised methods:** Stop work and identify a safer alternative if the available equipment cannot complete the task safely.
- **Manage line-of-fire hazards:** Position workers and plant outside potential recoil, projectile and stored-energy release zones.
- **Plan the task:** Assess risks before moving heavy components and verify the proposed method safely manages the load.
- **Encourage intervention:** Stop and reassess the job when conditions change or workers consider an unplanned approach.

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