



SAFETY BULLETIN

Cover your vehicle load safely

BACKGROUND

An unacceptable number of incidents have raised concerns regarding the covering of loads on trucks/semi-trailers. Most of the injuries result from falls. Workplace injuries investigations indicate causal factors resulting from:

- Equipment not fit-for-purpose being used to cover the load
- People working at heights to operate or maintain the cover mechanism
- People either not being tethered when working at heights or not being supplied a safe work platform on which to carry out the task.

Injuries are being suffered by people operating and/or maintaining covers from an elevated position where there is inadequate working at heights provision.

Investigations have found that a lack of fit-for-purpose equipment, poor work practices and inappropriate management systems for the covering of loads on trucks/semi-trailers contribute to incidents. The design and operation of covers requires an understanding of the *NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000*, *NSW Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001* and Australian Standards. Design and use of covers must include risk management, consultation, training and conformance to community standards.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Industry is reminded of its obligations under the *NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 (OHS Act)*. Under the provision of section 8, employers have a duty to provide a safe workplace and ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees. Section 11 places duties on designers, manufacturers and suppliers of plant to ensure plant is safe and without risk to health when properly used. Section 13 requires employers to consult with employees when making decisions which affect their health, safety and welfare.

Extracts of these are shown below:

8 Duties of employers

(1) Employees

An employer must ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of all the employees of the employer. That duty extends (without limitation) to the following:

- (a) ensuring that any premises controlled by the employer where the employees work (and the means of access to or exit from the premises) are safe and without risks to health,
- (b) ensuring that any plant or substance provided for use by the employees at work is safe and without risks to health when properly used,
- (c) ensuring that systems of work and the working environment of the employees are safe and without risks to health,
- (d) providing such information, instruction, training and supervision as may be necessary to ensure the employees' health and safety at work,
- (e) providing adequate facilities for the welfare of the employees at work.

(2) Others at workplace

An employer must ensure that people (other than the employees of the employer) are not exposed to risks to their health or safety arising from the conduct of the employer's undertaking while they are at the employer's place of work.

11 Duties of designers, manufacturers and suppliers of plant and substances for use at work

- (1) A person who designs, manufactures or supplies any plant or substance for use by people at work must:
- (a) ensure that the plant or substance is safe and without risks to health when properly used
 - (b) provide, or arrange for the provision of, adequate information about the plant or substance to the persons to whom it is supplied to ensure its safe use.

For more information on the *OHS Act*, *OHS Regulation* and Codes of Practice visit the NSW DPI Minerals website: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/minerals/safety/legislation

ADVICE TO INDUSTRY

With respect to covers used on trucks and semi-trailers the following advice is given:

- A person must be able to operate and maintain the cover mechanism safely and without risks to health
- The manufacturer must ensure the cover mechanism is safe and without risk to health when properly used
- The manufacturer must provide sufficient information to ensure the cover mechanism is safe and without risk to health when properly used.

It is suggested that cover mechanisms which can be operated and maintained from the ground give the least risk of injury from 'fall from height'.

If a truck or semi-trailer requires a cover mechanism to be operated or maintained from height then adequate safety provision is required to allow

working from height. This would include the consideration of a work platform and/or a tethering device to safely restrain a person from falling. Working at heights information may be found at WorkCover NSW website (www.workcover.nsw.gov.au) and reference is made in NSW DPI Safety Alerts (www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/minerals/safety/safety-alerts).

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a matter of priority all mine sites should ensure appropriate fit-for-purpose covers are used and working at heights provision is supplied according to the operational, maintenance and design characteristics of the cover used on your trucks/semi-trailers. Consideration is to include both employees and contractors operating and maintaining cover mechanisms onsite. Consideration should cater for unexpected failures.

NOTE: Please ensure all relevant people in your organisation receive a copy of this Safety Bulletin, and are informed of its content and recommendations. This Safety Bulletin should be processed in a systematic manner through the mine's information and communication process. It should also be placed on the mine's notice board.

Signed



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View more safety alerts at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/minerals/safety/safety-alerts. If you would like to receive safety alerts by email, send your contact details to safetyalert@dpi.nsw.gov.au