



Health and Safety Bulletin No. 2

Lifting, lowering or suspending loads

Date: 20 September 2022

Background

A number of incidents have recently occurred when plant has been used to lift, lower or suspend loads near workers. Incidents have resulted in serious injuries and fatalities.

Contributory factors

Contributory factors vary between incidents, but include:

- no planning to develop a safe system of work that considers
 - exclusion zones
 - designated lifting areas
 - control or elimination of simultaneous activities within the lifting area
- failure of lifting equipment
- lack of information, training, instruction
- inadequate supervision.

Actions required

When lifting, lowering or suspending loads, PCBU's and other duty holders must ensure that:

- they have consulted with workers, including contractors to identify hazards and manage risks associated with this task
- workers are given information, training and instruction on the hazards, risks and control measures
- workers have the correct licence for the work, if necessary
- work is planned, and designated lifting areas, landing areas, paths of travel and exclusion zones are identified
- when determining the size of exclusion zones, all risks arising in relation to the work are considered
- the plant, any attachments and lifting components (such as chain slings, synthetic slings and hooks) are suitable for the load
- all plant and lifting components are rated to lift the load
- lifting components are protected from sharp corners of the load

- the plant and lifting method selected is suitable for the load and the load remains stable throughout the activity, never causing loads to swing
- the weight and centre of gravity of the load is known
- the working environment is considered, including temperature, heat sources (e.g. weld spatter), chemical use (corrosive environments), power lines and other obstructions
- loads are never moved or suspended over a person
- all lifting components are visually inspected before each use, and tested according to the manufacturer's instructions and in-line with any relevant Australian Standard recommendations
- damaged or worn equipment is never used
- work is appropriately supervised to ensure that safe systems of work are followed
- a safe work method statement or lifting plan is prepared
- lifting components are stored in a clean and dry location
- lifting slings are never dropped, thrown down or dragged
- personal protective equipment is provided and workers are trained in its use and maintenance.

References and further information

Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety

- [Bridge cranes](#)
- [Guidance about dogging, rigging and lifting](#)
- [Managing the risks of plant in the workplace: Code of Practice](#)
- [Slinging loads in metal manufacturing](#)

Australian Standards

- The Australian Standard/s relevant to the plant and lifting equipment should be consulted and followed so far as is reasonably practicable.

Safe Work Australia

- [High risk work licensing for dogging – Information sheet](#)

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