

LTI – forklift knocked spooler bar onto person's leg

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While helping with spooling operations at a third-party yard, a person was injured in the lower leg.

What happened?

While helping with spooling operations at a third-party yard, a person was injured in the lower leg, when a forklift truck struck the edge of a spooler bar causing it to roll onto his legs, resulting in soft tissue damage. The injured person was working on a spooling winch, with the spooler bar positioned behind him, resting on wooden chocks. The forklift truck reversed from the rear of the spooling winch and struck the edge of the spooler bar, resulting in it rolling from the wooden chocks onto the persons' leg. He was unable to work for four days.

- What was expected to happen?
 - It was planned that spooler bar would be inserted into the reel.
- What actually happened?
 - The wrong size of spooler bar was provided by a sub-contractor, and this led to the spooler bar being placed in an unsafe position in the working area of the person who was injured.

What went wrong?

- There were only two personnel involved in conducting the operation, and the supervisor was also fulfilling the role of forklift truck operator and rigger.
- There were no hard barriers in place to mitigate hazard of impact/collision.
- The impact sensors on the forklift truck did not detect the spooler bar when reversing, as the sensor was positioned at the top of the forklift truck and the spooler bar was below this level.
- The forklift truck operator unexpectedly decided to reverse the forklift truck through a congested working area with no banksman.

What went right?

- The injured person received first aid treatment on site and was quickly transferred to local hospital for X-ray and further assessment.

Actions

- Verified that existing risk assessments for fork-lift truck operations were

fully aligned with company requirements and specifically cover:

- Access, moving the fork-lift truck, the travelling surface and obstructions at the work location.
- Signalling and communications protocol.
- If the fork-lift truck operator's vision is obscured, always use a Banksman to guide the fork-lift truck.
- Reviewed use of sensors and alarms on fork-lift trucks to mitigate impact/collision risk.
- Subsequently, the subcontractor involved installed reversing cameras on all forklifts.

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