

Hand injury during lift operations

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During a mechanical lifting operation using a mobile crane, the crane was required to move and set up at a new location.

What happened?

The crane outrigger stabiliser pads (1.2T x 4) used to distribute the load from the outriggers were repositioned one at a time using a counterbalance forklift truck (FLT) and placed onto timber blocks to allow the removal of the forks.

To remove the timber block from beneath the outrigger pad, the pad was attached to the elevated FLT forks/tines using two webbing slings. As the pad was being raised off the timber block, it caught on the front left tyre (FLT) causing the pad to jerk/swing.

This resulted in one of the two slings releasing, enabling the pad to drop back onto the timber block.

The employee who was in the process of retrieving the timber block from underneath the suspended pad sustained hand injuries when the pad fell.



What went wrong?

The investigation established that the activity was not adequately planned,

IOGP Life Saving Rules:



Line of fire



Safe mechanical lifting

assessed or supervised, and this resulted in the improper use of a forklift truck.

What actions were taken?

- Banned the practice 'free rigging' – that is, attaching ropes, chains or slings to FLT forks/tines for the purpose of below tine lifting and moving.
- **In progress/pending:**
 - Can a removable attachment be used when there is the need to move a suspended load using an FLT? Is the FLT itself appropriate?
 - Review the existing processes, procedures, risk assessments and operator competency to ensure the safety of FLT and lifting operations
 - Re-evaluate the behavioural safety aspects of routine operations, including individual responsibilities to work safely and speak up to identify an unsafe act or condition.

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