

BULLETIN

VACC Occupational Health, Safety and Environment



Reference No: Safety Alert

Date issued: 14/02/2018

Vehicle Hoist Incident Prosecution

What happened:

A VACC member business was fined \$40,000 with an additional \$3,500 related court costs for failure to provide a safe system of work.

While an apprentice was working underneath a vehicle, he was approached by another person at the workplace. At some point while they were both underneath the vehicle it fell off the hoist. The apprentice jumped clear and wasn't injured. The other person received significant crush injuries.

The findings of the investigation were that the hoist locking arms were disengaged by a worker, and the locking arms were not re-engaged.

Court findings:

The business pleaded guilty to two charges associated with failing to provide a safe system of work. The Court found the business was guilty of not having safe working procedures requiring the safety locking arms to be fully engaged and that there was no instruction for a vehicle hoist daily pre-operational checklist to be completed prior to use.

Despite the organisation receiving a significant penalty, the level of the fines could have been up to \$300,000. However, the business having a good reputation, as well as, engaging professional OHS assistance and legal advice lowered the penalty.

Learning Outcomes

Based on this prosecution and enforceable hoist requirements, VACC Members with hoists must ensure the following:

- Alert technicians and service managers of this Safety Alert via toolbox talks or safety talks
- Employees **MUST NEVER** disengage safety locking mechanisms or other safety features
- Technicians **MUST** conduct a **daily** pre-operational check of the vehicle hoist
- Vehicle hoists **MUST** be serviced annually and a major service every 10 years
- Ensure all hoist decals remain on the vehicle hoist
- Vehicle hoists must comply with Australian Standards and be design certified by any state WorkSafe Authority
- Design verification is required every 25 years from the manufacturer
- Retain all records of vehicle hoist maintenance and inspection

These requirements have been around for almost 20 years, yet the VACC OHSE Unit still finds a number of businesses unfamiliar with these requirements.

Previous media articles relating to this incident may not have accurately reflected the details of this incident. For further information or assistance please contact the VACC OHSE Unit on 03 9829 1265 or by email ohs@vacc.com.au.

Regards

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'P. D'Alessandri', is positioned above the typed name.

Patrick D'Alessandri
VACC Occupational Health, Safety and Environment Manager
P: 03 9829 1138
E: pdalessandri@vacc.com.au