



Significant Incident Report No. 249

Subject: Drill offsider run over by tracked vehicle

Date: 11 October 2016

Summary of incident

Note: The Department of Mines and Petroleum's investigation is ongoing. The information contained in this significant incident report is based on material received, knowledge and understanding at the time of writing.

In August 2016, a drill offsider was trammung a tracked vehicle on his own, returning to the shore of a salt lake to refuel. Both of the vehicle's control levers were strapped in position so the vehicle could move forward without the offsider continuously holding the controls.

As another tracked vehicle approached, the offsider alighted from his vehicle and walked over to talk to the two occupants. After a brief conversation, the offsider returned to his vehicle, which was still moving forward on its own.

He slipped and fell while trying to climb back into the cab. The vehicle ran over him, with one of the tracks passing along the length of his body. A person from the other vehicle managed to stop the unmanned vehicle, which was clear of the offsider.

Fortunately, the ground was very soft and the offsider was pushed down into the ground by the vehicle's track. He had injuries to his head and face, and a fractured hand.



Left. Vehicle track marks and indentation where the offsider was pushed into the soft ground. Right. Straps used to hold both control levers in the forward moving position.

Direct causes

- The offsider bypassed the "return to neutral" safety function of the control levers and climbed off the vehicle while it was still moving.
- The offsider fell while trying to climb back into the cab and was unable to get out of the way of the moving vehicle.

Contributory causes

- The vehicle's control levers (enabling devices or dead-man control levers) were modified, allowing the vehicle to move by itself without a person continuously holding the controls.
- The vehicle's safe operating procedure (SOP) was not followed.
- The ladder to access the control cab had been removed for maintenance.



Cab of tracked vehicle. Note the straps used to hold control levers in place and the absence of the ladder (and position of brackets for ladder).

Actions required

These actions are recommended to reduce the potential for injury while working with mobile plant.

Modification of plant

- Modifications to mobile plant safety features must be addressed with the supplier and original equipment manufacturer, in reference to the relevant Australian Standard.

Safe work procedures

- Undertake a documented risk assessment of all mobile plant in the workplace to identify, assess and control all hazards to which workers are likely to be exposed.
- Provide adequate supervision, training and assessment of competency for workers on site who use mobile plant, including the application of SOPs.

Maintenance

- Implement an effective hazard reporting system for mobile plant so workers can report faults and defective items for rectification.
- Provide and maintain safe and easy access to mobile plant (e.g. for pre-start checks, operation, maintenance, refuelling and cleaning).
- Implement a mobile plant maintenance system, including periodic inspections by competent persons, to ensure plant are maintained in a safe condition.

Further information

- Department of Mines and Petroleum, How is risk managed during the life cycle of plant? www.dmp.wa.gov.au/Safety/How-is-risk-managed-during-the-7945.aspx

This Significant Incident Report was approved for release by the State Mining Engineer on 11 October 2016