

# Mobile equipment operator injured when seat belt failed

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## What happened?

An operator of a loaded agitator truck was driving down a ramp when he felt a bump and was thrown from the driver's seat. His head struck the cabin roof and he sustained neck injuries.

The operator's seat belt was found to be buckled together but one half of the seat belt had detached from its anchor point. The anchor point fixing bolt was found still in the seat belt stem eyelet.

## How did it happen?

The anchor point fixing bolt was found to have completely unscrewed from its mount on the side of a suspension seat frame. The bolt thread was in good condition, clean and was easily able to be screwed back into the mounting point. The bolt head showed signs of rubbing wear.

It was found that the rubbing marks on the bolt head corresponded with marks on the seat frame. The head of the bolt had been striking the panel for some time. The action of the seat suspension exacerbated this contact and over time had contributed the bolt to coming undone.

## Comments

There was no information provided in the site training material on how to set up the seat in the truck.

All seats should have instructions from the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) on how to correctly set it up to suit each individual operator.

## Recommendations

All sites should inspect their mobile equipment to ensure:

- all seats are fit for purpose and meet the OEM specifications
- all seat mounts and seat belt anchor points are checked for security
- all seat belt interlocks, if fitted, function as per the OEM specification
- OEM information pertaining to the correct adjustment of the driver's suspension seat should be made available to all equipment operators
- all seats, mounts and seat belts should be inspected, to verify there is no interference between them and any other items in the cabin that could prevent the safe operation and intended function of the driver's seat
- inspection of seat mounts, seat belt anchor points, seat belt interlocks, if fitted and seat belts are included as part of scheduled maintenance programs.



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