

NZ Safety Alert

Let's work together to keep ourselves and our workers safe

September 2019

Failure of seatbelt bracket



A late model loader was operating at a sand quarry. The operator of the loader drove into the sand stockpile to load his bucket. As he did so the seatbelt bracket failed, and the operator was flung forward striking his head against the cab roof and windscreen. Fortunately, the operator only received a minor neck muscle strain in the incident.

The loader is less than a year old and the seatbelt is otherwise in good condition. The distributor of the equipment was notified, and they are conducting a full investigation into the failure.

In the short term all loader seatbelt assemblies have been visually inspected by a competent person.

MinEx data on incidents with the potential to cause harm over the 24 months to June 2019 show 30% of all incidents (597 incidents) result from vehicle incidents, 41% of which are due to loss of control of a vehicle.

You need to ensure that:

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1. As part of regular maintenance, seatbelt assemblies and securing brackets are visually checked by a suitably qualified person.
2. Operators are trained and assessed as competent to operate mobile equipment, including pre-start inspections which should include seatbelt assemblies and brackets.
3. Seatbelts are worn at all times. You may need to consider consequences for those caught not wearing seatbelts.
4. Plant should be locked out and not used if seatbelt assemblies and/or brackets are faulty and unable to be used properly.

Know of an incident or near miss? Please share the learnings with us.