Crane Incidents

INCIDENT # 1

On Friday 22 February 2019, WorkSafe ACT was called to an industrial yard in Hume after being alerted that a mobile crane had tipped over. Inspectors were faced with a 300T mobile slewing crane that had tipped while undergoing maintenance/servicing and came to rest with the driver cabin approximately 10 metres in the air.

Preliminary investigations revealed that the tasks were being undertaken without the required counterweights resulting in the crane tipping once the boom section was extended where it exceeded the stability moment for the crane. Investigations are continuing including a detailed examination of data from the crane’s computer and establishing the roles of the high-risk work licence holders on site at the time of the incident.

INCIDENT # 2

On Sunday 24 February 2019, WorkSafe ACT was called to a construction site in Gungahlin after receiving a report of a counterweight that was being lifted dropped from a crane, hitting an unoccupied truck beneath. Preliminary investigation of the incident has revealed that the 10-tonne counterweight was being lifted off the crane when one of the slings released from the lifting lug which dropped the counterweight onto the crane impacting its outrigger and rolling onto a light truck causing extensive damage to the truck.

Further investigations are continuing including an examination of the design and manufacturing processes of the lifting points on counterweights.

In both incidents workers were in close proximity to the incidents and very lucky not to have been seriously injured or killed.

It is imperative that a rigid system and Safe Work Method Statements are prepared and strictly followed when undertaking high risk construction work.
RISKS

Workers have previously been seriously and fatally injured in incidents involving all different types of cranes. The operation of a crane requires a high-risk work licence and must strictly follow a documented Safe Work Method Statement.

It is imperative that any Safe Work Method Statement is strictly followed and the planned process is not deviated from without appropriate planning and documenting variations to the Safe Work Method Statement.

MITIGATING THE RISKS

Cranage is a high risk work activity requiring a number of workers possessing the appropriate high risk work licence including crane operators and dogmen.

Only competent, suitable qualified, trained, instructed and supervised workers are to participate in crane operations. All workers are required to be inducted into the Safe Work Method Statement and possess an intimate knowledge of the high-risk work activity before work commences. Each individual crane lift must be planned and the planning communicated between the persons involved in the lifting operation.
If you are a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) involved in crane operations you must ensure:

- an appropriate safe system of work is in place;
- the work is planned, including the development of a complex lift study or similar for more complex lifts that is appropriate to the task and lifting operation;
- the work is monitored and supervised by a competent person who is experienced in crane operations;
- a site-specific Safe Work Method Statements is developed and followed. The methodology must minimise the risk to workers during the crane operations that is appropriate to the individual task, is available onsite and has all workers inducted into it.
- workers are suitably trained, competent and qualified to perform the task; and
- workers performing high risk work activities are licensed.

FURTHER INFORMATION
For information on High Risk Work Licensing visit our website.