



**DEPARTMENT OF MINERALS AND ENERGY
WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT REPORT NO. 56

**UNCONTROLLED DISCHARGE OF STORED ENERGY SOURCE
- FATAL ACCIDENT**

INCIDENT

A maintenance fitter received fatal crush injuries when he was trapped between the front wheel arch and tyre of an off road dump truck.

He was removing set screws from a cover on a suspension cylinder. The removal of these screws allowed a nitrogen charge contained in the cylinder to escape. This in turn allowed the vehicle frame to move downwards suddenly crushing him.

Warning labels regarding the danger of serious injury or death in the event of the set screws being removed without supporting the truck body were attached to the suspension cylinders of this vehicle. A similar warning was contained in the manufacturer's maintenance manual.

CAUSE

- The vehicle had not been washed down and the warning signs attached to the suspension cylinders may not have been clearly visible.
- Blocks were not installed to prevent the downward movement of the vehicle body and frame.

COMMENTS AND PREVENTATIVE ACTION

- Employers should ensure that their employees are fully aware of the potential hazards and risks associated with any task to which they are allocated.
- Maintenance employees who are about to undertake a task which they have not attempted before or who are unsure of the correct way to carry out a job should consult the manufacturer's instruction manual and discuss the matter with the supervisor to clearly establish a safe working procedure.
- A means of controlled discharge should be available whenever stored energy sources may be released during maintenance work.

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SAFETY AWARENESS SAVES LIVES