



Significant Incident Report No. 271

Subject: Near miss when latch fails and gate swings open on a haul truck

Date: 23 November 2018

Summary of incident

During April 2018, a worker was exposed to potentially serious injuries when a handrail latch failed, causing a handrail gate to swing open.

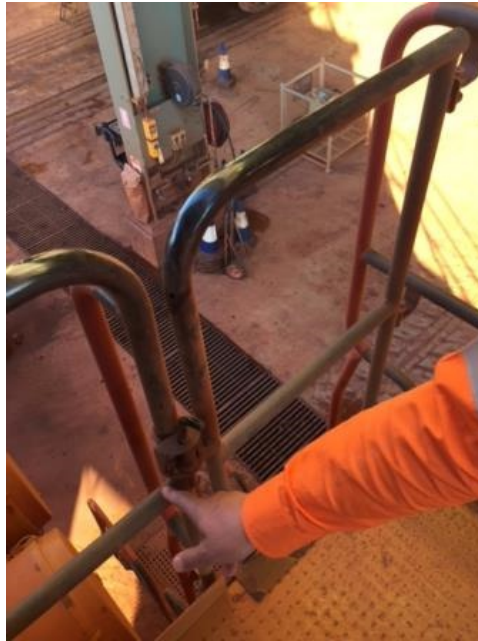
The truck was in the queue to receive a load when a trainee operator and the trainer stepped out of the cab to hold a discussion. The trainee was leaning over the handrail outside the cab near the emergency ladder when the latch failed. The trainee lost his balance and grabbed the handrail. The trainer reacted immediately and grabbed the trainee's arm to prevent him from falling. The distance to the ground was more than four meters.



Location of the emergency ladder on a mining haul truck

Direct causes

The latch securing the handrail gate in a closed position failed.



Contributory causes

- The site's routine maintenance program and prestart inspection regime for the plant didn't prompt workers to inspect the latch.
- The original equipment manufacturer (OEM) released a service bulletin in April 2017 relating to the latch; however, the recommended works were not actioned on this vehicle.
- The OEM's service bulletin didn't identify the hazard relating to a failure of the latch. Nor did it communicate this as a mandatory improvement or a priority for the recommended works.

Actions required

The following actions are recommended to prevent similar incidents.

- Implement a safe system of work to periodically check the condition of handrails and any securing mechanisms to ensure they are serviceable. This may include inspections during maintenance and prestarts.
- Develop a safe system of work to review and action any relevant literature and guidance issued by sources including OEMs, regulators and other relevant/professional bodies.
- Engage a competent person(s) to check if edge protection installed on mobile plant is fit for purpose – prior to its introduction to a mine site and periodically during its life cycle. Australian Standard AS 1657 provides guidance for design and testing of edge protection, including handrails.

Further information

- Australian Standard AS 1657:2018 Fixed Platforms, walkways, stairways and ladders – Design, construction and installation

This Significant Incident Report was approved for release by the State Mining Engineer on 23 November 2018