



Safety Bulletin

Uncontrolled movement of vehicles

Each year people suffer serious and fatal injuries in NSW due to incidents involving the uncontrolled movement (roll away) of vehicles, including cars, trucks, buses, vans, forklifts, tractors, mobile cranes etc. In most incidents the operator was not in the driver's seat at the time of the incident.

Contributing factors

The uncontrolled movement of a vehicle can occur due to any singular or combination of reasons, including;

- the operator not engaging the parking brake, or not engaging the parking brake sufficiently;
- the vehicle being left in gear when exiting the vehicle;
- not parking on a level surface;
- inadequate inspection and maintenance of the braking system;
- Inadequate design integrity of interlocked braking systems, i.e. the brakes can be intentionally or unintentionally released by the operator's actions;
- loads added to or removed from a vehicle that is supported by stabilisers /outriggers on an inclined surface;
- forces imposed by the movement of parts of a vehicle supported by stabilisers or outriggers on an inclined surface;
- failure of a component within the braking system;



Action required - operators

- park the vehicle on level ground. Where it is not reasonably practicable to park the vehicle on level ground, be aware of the limitations of the vehicle including the maximum slope of the supporting surface and what to do when parking on a gradient;
- always apply the parking brake when exiting the vehicle;
- chock the wheels of vehicles and trailers before conducting inspection or maintenance activities;

Action required – persons with management or control of plant

- ensure the vehicle is inspected and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations;
- be familiar with the components and limitations of the braking system;
- consider the implementation of aftermarket controls that minimise the risk of uncontrolled movement of vehicles;
- develop site specific parking locations and procedures in consultation with workers;
- ensure your workers have the necessary training, experience and supervision to identify hazards to control the risks associated with the uncontrolled movement of vehicles;
- routinely monitor and review all control measures;

MLA Holdings can provide further operator protection from uncontrolled movement of vehicles. Mitsubishi forklift trucks series now feature an Integrated Presence System (IPS) to minimise accidents caused by remote human error. The IPS focuses on immobilising the movement of the forklift truck and its hydraulic functions when the operator leaves their seat and sounding an audible alarm if the Park Brake is not applied.

Information for this article was sourced from www.safework.nsw.gov.au. For further forklift safety information contact MLA Holdings on 131 652 or www.mlaholdings.com.au.