

New standards to boost Forklift Safety

Industry buy-in for effort to adopt new international standards

Forklift users across the country stand to benefit from intended safety improvements of several international standards recently adopted in Australia, with more to come over the next 12 months, Standards Australia reports.

A number of international standards governing industrial trucks, or forklifts, have recently been adopted as Australian standards following "extensive stakeholder consultation".

The International Standards adopted have benefited from heavy influence of Australian experts ensuring their application in Australia, underpinned by international best practice.

"Industrial trucks (forklifts) are used right across Australia for many different applications, and these new publications will focus on those areas that prioritise driver safety," said CEO of Standards Australia Dr Bronwyn Evans says. The effort has gained the backing of the relevant industry body.

"The industrial truck industry in Australia is one deeply committed to safety, and these standards which are supported by international best practice are excellent tools to help drivers, operators and those maintaining these vehicles to do so at the high standard expected by the Australian community," Sue Hart, executive officer of the Australian Forklift and Industrial Truck Association (AFITA), says.

ME-026 Industrial Trucks, the relevant technical committee of Standards Australia, has been working tirelessly to publish a number of standards developed by the International Organization for Standardisation (ISO) on industrial trucks (forklifts), Standards Australia says.

Several have been delivered recently, with multiple standards still underway at various stages of development.

"Australia is leading the way in improving safety of industrial truck standards in part due to our robust WHS/OHS legislation," Stan Palmer, who chairs the Standards Australia technical committee responsible for the work in Australia, says.

"These improvements include the sequential seatbelt now required to be fitted to all sit-down counterbalance forklifts to ensure the operator is using the seatbelt, as well as the slow-down of electric forklifts when the mast is elevated reducing the risk of tip-over.

MLA has been an active committee member of AFITA from 2002 and has participated in the development of ISO standards for industrial trucks since 2002. Where possible, the committee will continue to adopt ISO standards rather than developing Australian Standards in relation to industrial trucks ensuring international guidance is brought into the Australian community."

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

