

## Safety Alert

# Worker seriously injured after fall from make shift forklift workbox

The purpose of this Safety Alert is to remind businesses and workers to only use forklift attachments that have been designed and manufactured in accordance with the Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulations 2011.

## Background

In mid-August 2022, a worker in the commercial fishing industry was seriously injured after falling over 3.6 metres. The worker was in a mesh storage cage raised on forklift tynes when the incident occurred.

Preliminary findings indicate the worker's weight may have shifted causing the mesh storage cage to unbalance and fall.

The worker landed on concrete and suffered serious injuries including a punctured lung, broken teeth, rib fractures and serious lacerations to the inside of the mouth\*.



**Image:** The mesh storage cage used was not a suitable forklift workbox.

\* The worker has given NT WorkSafe consent to provide specific details of their injuries.

## Possible contributing factors

- The mesh storage cage used was not fit for purpose as a workbox for workers to work from
- The mesh storage cage was not secured to the forklift.
- The worker was not wearing a safety harness.
- The forklift operator had exited the forklift when the incident occurred.

## Action required

- Only use workboxes and other forklift attachments that have been designed by a competent engineer and manufactured by a competent person.
- Workboxes should only be used on forklifts with a load capacity data plate stating attachments may be used.
- Workboxes must be securely attached to the forklift and should only be used to lift workers for short term tasks.
- Ensure workers are trained in the safe use of workboxes including emergency procedures to ensure occupants can be rescued if an incident or breakdown occurs.
- Workbox occupants should wear a safety harness if there is a risk of them falling.

## Before the workbox occupant starts work

- Ensure traffic management plans are in place to deal with tasks involving workboxes.
- Ensure the forklift parking brake is set, the controls are in neutral, the mast is vertical, and all controls are immobilised except lift and lower.
- Workers must stand on the floor of the workbox, not on a ladder or other object.
- The forklift operator should perform an initial trial lift without a person inside, to ensure the cage has a clear path.
- The forklift operator must remain at the controls at all times when there is a person elevated in the workbox.

## Further information

For further information, please refer to the following:

### Safety Alerts

- [Serious crush injury highlights lack of risk assessment of plant](#)

### Code of Practice

- [Managing risks of plant in the workplace](#)

### Guides

- [Forklift safety – reducing the risks](#)

### Disclaimer

*This Safety Alert contains safety information following inquiries made by NT WorkSafe about an incident or unsafe practice. The information contained in this Alert does not necessarily include the outcome of NT WorkSafe's action with respect to an incident. NT WorkSafe does not warrant the information in this Alert is complete or up-to-date and does not accept any liability for the information in this report or as to its use.*