

Workboxes on industrial forklift trucks must comply with standards



The Issue

There have been a number of recent serious incidents involving people falling from heights while working in workboxes that had been elevated on industrial forklift trucks. In one of these cases, the fall led to a fatality.

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What You Must Do

Workboxes supported by an industrial forklift truck must be design registered with Workplace Standards Tasmania or another Australian Workplace health and safety authority. The design must conform to the requirements of Australian Standard AS 2359.1—1995 *Powered industrial trucks — General requirements*. Section 12.3 covers the requirements for work platforms (workboxes).

If your workbox is not design registered, it must not be used.

Recommended Safe Operating Practices

The use of workboxes should be limited to special tasks of short duration where it is not possible to use a scaffold or other specially designed device.

Normal risk assessment processes should be supplemented by referring to Section 3.8 of AS 2359.2—1985 *Industrial trucks – Operation*, which covers safety practices for the use of work platforms (workboxes); or to an equivalent or better standard.

In particular, comply with these practices:

- ensure the forklift is only used on a hard level surface
- use barriers or warning signs to prevent interference while the workbox is in use
- ensure the operator stays with the forklift controls at all times
- immobilise the controls (other than the lifting and lowering controls)
- ensure the workbox is securely attached to the fork lift truck
- ensure the person being elevated stands on the floor of the workbox at all times. Do not use ladders in the workbox to gain extra height or reach.

Fall protection (such as a safety harness) is also strongly recommended for any person elevated in a workbox. The fall protection should comply with AS/NZS 1891.4: 2000 *Industrial fall-arrest systems and devices — selection, use and maintenance*, or to an equivalent or better standard.

Breaches

Due to the serious consequences that could arise from using a non-compliant workbox, Workplace Standards inspectors will adopt a zero tolerance of any detected breaches. Using a workbox that is not design registered is a Level 3 offence under the *Workplace Health and Safety Regulations 1998* and attracts a maximum penalty of \$18,000.

If you would like further information contact Workplace Standards Tasmania on:
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