

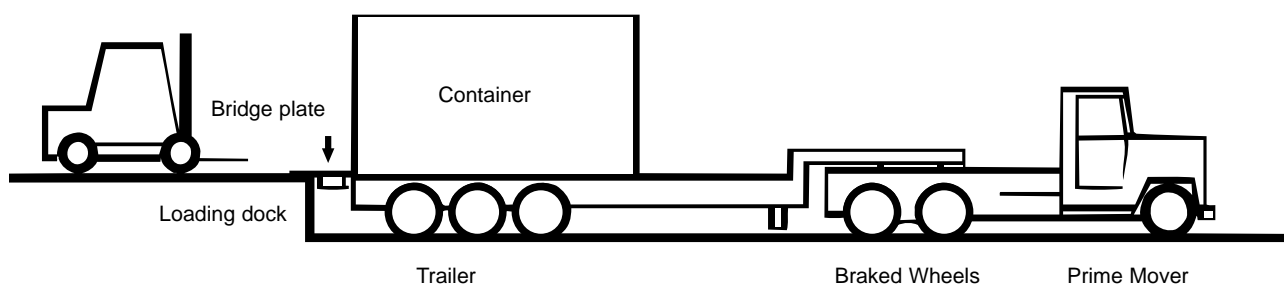
No job is more important.



Safety Alert

Nº.1 1998

FORK-LIFT FALLS FROM REAR OF TRUCK



A fork-lift driver was injured when the fork-lift truck he was driving fell between the loading dock and the semi-trailer he was loading.

The fork-lift was being used to load pallets of product into a container on the rear of the semi-trailer. A bridge plate was used so that the fork-lift could be driven from the loading dock directly into the container. The total weight of the fork-lift and the pallet of product was about four tonnes.

When the fork-lift stopped suddenly, inside the container, as happens when loading, considerable forward force was placed on the semi-trailer. When accelerating in reverse out of the container, the fork-lift also placed a forward force on the semi-trailer.

Each time this occurred, the semi-trailer skidded forward slightly even though the brakes were applied. Eventually, the semi-trailer moved forward enough so that it no longer adequately supported the bridge plate. When the fork-lift truck was backed onto the plate it collapsed, dropping the fork-lift and driver into the opening and pushing the semi-trailer forward even further.

This incident highlights the following:

- Any truck onto which a fork-lift truck is to drive must be secured by applying the brakes and by chocking the wheels.
- Bridge plates must be constructed with sufficient overlap between the truck and the loading dock so as not to be dislodged.



Other notes on driving fork-lifts onto vehicles

- The deck of the vehicle must be inspected prior to driving anything onto it to make sure that it is strong enough to carry a fork-lift and its load.
- Semi-trailers must not be driven onto unless either the prime mover is attached or the front of the trailer is supported to prevent it from collapsing. Generally, the trailer legs are not strong enough to hold the moving weight of a fork-lift truck.

For further information phone the Workplace Standards Authority on
1300 366 322 (inside Tasmania) or (03) 6233 7657 (outside Tasmania).

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