

# Work Health and Safety Guidance Note

## TRANSPORT INDUSTRY 'CHEATER EXTENSION BARS' ARE NOT TO BE USED

### The Issue

It has become common practice by transport drivers to put extensions (cheater bars) onto the twitch handle to gain extra leverage when tensioning chain type load binders.

There have been a number of workers compensation claims involving severe facial injuries as a result of the slippage of a pipe extension in such circumstances.

The National Transport Commission Load Restraint Guide – Guidelines and performance standards for the safe carriage of loads on road vehicles makes reference to the use of cheater bars – the use of these extensions is not approved by any manufacturer and can be dangerous.

### Alternatives

Ratchet tighteners are available to tighten chains where the twitch doesn't produce a satisfactory result. Webbing straps are also a viable alternative in many situations.

### What is expected by Workplace Standards?

Quite simply, cheater bars should not be used. Inspectors will take enforcement action to ensure compliance with the following principles:

- Loads are to be secured in a manner that is equal to or better than the standard of the National Transport Commission Load Restraint Guide.
- Employers and contractors must develop and follow a safe system of work for tensioning load binders. The manufacturer's operating instructions must be incorporated into the safe system of work.
- Employees are to be provided with information, instruction and training in the correct use of twitches.
- Employees must use twitches in a manner that is consistent with their employer's safe system of work.

### Contact Us:

#### Workplace Standards Tasmania

PO Box 56, Rosny Park, TAS, 7018

Phone: 1300 366 322 (within Tasmania) | (03) 6233 7657 (outside Tasmania) | Fax: (03) 6233 8338

Email: [wstinfo@justice.tas.gov.au](mailto:wstinfo@justice.tas.gov.au) | Web: [www.wst.tas.gov.au](http://www.wst.tas.gov.au)

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