

Failure of Two-way Radios During Cranage Work

This *Hazard Alert* is issued to inform persons involved in the crane industry including Company Principals, Crane Drivers and Doggers of the need to maintain and test two-way radios which may be used when a lift is being conducted from an unsighted position.

Background

ACT WorkCover received notification of a Dangerous Occurrence which occurred during a lift onto a roof area from the ground by crane. The crane operator and the dogger were communicating via two-way radios to direct the lift as they were not within sight of each other.

The radios, according to the report, were working satisfactorily as the lift proceeded and then failed as the load was being lowered into position resulting in damage to property.

Preventative Measures

After further investigation of the equipment it was established that a fault occurred with the radio's battery connection and circuit boards. In an effort to prevent these type of failures the following must apply:

- All two-way radio equipment must be maintained to the manufacturer's recommended standard to be assured of reliability during cranage work;
- Regular testing of components is advisable to retain confidence in the equipment's reliability; and
- Testing of equipment prior to all lifts is essential. It is advisable to test two-way equipment in the same area and under the same conditions as the actual lift prior to commencing work.

It is important to be aware of structures and/or materials which may have the effect of blocking or interfering with the radio signal. The surrounds of the lift area and possibly materials being handled, may interfere with the sound waves or prevent clear communication between operator and dogger, necessitating testing prior to the commencement of lifts.

Duties under the ACT *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1989*

The ACT *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1989 (the Act)* imposes a duty of care on all parties to take all reasonably practical steps to ensure that plant, and equipment used in the workplace present no risks to health or safety. Penalties exist for breaches of *the Act*.



