

SAFETY ALERT



TWO LARGE TRUCKS OUT OF CONTROL

INCIDENT

Two large rear dump trucks ran away on the same day at two different quarries.

CIRCUMSTANCES

A truck was fully loaded and 20 metres up a slope when the engine stalled. The brakes did not hold the truck on the slope and it rolled backwards. The tray hit another truck on the driver's cabin side and badly damaged it. The drivers were not hurt.

At another quarry a truck was empty and going down a long decline when the brakes seemed to fail. The driver managed to finally stop the truck. The truck was not damaged and the driver was not hurt.

INVESTIGATION

In both incidents:

- Maintenance, testing and inspection of the braking systems were inadequate.
- Drivers had not been given training in emergency response procedures.
- Audits were not being done on the safety aspects of truck operation, maintenance, testing and inspection.
- Regular brake tests were not being carried out.
- The driver at the second quarry was able to stop his truck only when he asked his supervisor on the 2-way radio how to slow down in an emergency.

A similar incident is set out in Safety Alert SA 99-13 (16 July 1999).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Mobile equipment should be designed, operated and maintained in accordance with MDG 15.
2. Australian Standard AS 2958 (or MDG 39, *Handbook for Braking Systems*) and equipment manufacturers' recommendations should be used to develop and implement a brake safety management plan for your site. This plan should include:
 - Training for equipment operators, maintenance personnel and supervisory staff in brake maintenance, inspection and testing, operation and emergency procedures.
 - Auditing the safety aspects of mobile equipment and operator skills (eg emergency response and use of engine braking).
 - The carrying out of regular brake tests.
 - A site operational risk assessment for all mobile equipment.

R Regan
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SAFETY OPERATIONS