

RUNAWAY TIPPER CAUSES SERIOUS DAMAGE

Details of Incident

An Agency Driver was making his 4th aggregate delivery of the day to a Concrete Plant in a rigid 8 wheeled tipper truck; it was getting dark and the site had switched on the flood lights.

The driver misjudged his approach angle to the receiving hopper ramp and lost air pressure to his truck whilst shunting. He made a second attempt at the manoeuvre and got the vehicle to the top of the ramp, but once again had lost air pressure. He then climbed out of the vehicle, leaving the engine running, but failed to apply the hand brake. He went to the rear of the vehicle to inspect the clearance to the hopper. As the air pressure built up, the brakes released and the vehicle ran away down the ramp. It collided with some pallets of paving slabs and steel racking, which subsequently pushed into a Portakabin that was occupied by several people from a neighbouring business, causing significant damage.

Key Findings

- The driver failed to switch the engine off when he got out to inspect the hopper clearance during all 4 deliveries.
- The warning alarm, which should of sounded when the driver opened the door without engaging the handbrake, failed to activate.

How Could this Incident Have Been Avoided?

- Ensure vehicle checks include all safety critical devices and necessary repairs are carried out.
- Always apply the handbrake before leaving a vehicle.

Key Review Points

- Monitor use of vehicle handbrakes and reinforce their importance where necessary
- Ensure handbrake warning alarms remain operational on all vehicles
- Remind drivers of the importance of vehicle isolation
- Review sites with ramps to identify any areas at particular risk from runaway vehicles; determine whether it is necessary to relocate or protect any existing buildings / structures.



Receiving Hopper Ramp



Scene Inside Portakabin



Resting Place of Vehicle

Tools and Equipment

Use the right, well maintained, tools/equipment for the job. Never make do.

Safe Systems

Follow safe systems of work, site rules, signage and traffic signals.

Driving

Drive safely, ensure you are authorised and that vehicles/mobile plant are well maintained.



Safety Checks

Carry out your vehicle checks before driving and make sure your load is stable and secure.



Site Safety

Check for hazards when on site, be highly visible and assess the risks before unloading.



Remember

– Your family depends on you. So drive to arrive safely at all times!