CICA - Vic / Tas Branch

Crane Safety Bulletin # 188

October 6th, 2015

Greetings All,

When it comes to working with cranes, steel and other heavy equipment, what would be the best piece of safety advice you have ever been given?

The words that I have always remembered came from a wise old rigger – **Don't put yourself in between two things that are harder than you!**

Consider some of the crush zones and pinch points that crane crews work with on a daily basis – Outriggers, slew zones, steel erection, machinery and precast placement… the list is endless. Working with these potentially dangerous situations is something that can be managed, however we must always be vigilant.

Consider the middle section of an articulating Pick and Carry Crane. The zone between the front and back sections of the crane is a well-known crush zone which should always be clearly identified through signage. Working in this area whilst the crane is running is something that should always be avoided where possible.

The operation of Vehicle Loading Cranes also has potential for crush zones being a risk. Operation of the crane from being stowed to being operational should always be managed using the lowest possible risk – either a remote control or on the non-crush zone side of the vehicle.

Outriggers on mobile cranes also are areas where there are two separate risks. Both the outrigger boxes and the outrigger pads have the potential for crush injuries. How many times have you heard of a lunchbox or a two way radio being squashed after being inadvertently left on an outrigger whilst the crane is being packed up?

The dynamic nature of cranes with their rotating upper sections sees a range of crush zone risks. These can be between the crane upper and the carrier, or between the crane upper and the environment around the crane itself. Modern All Terrain cranes are generally less exposed than the older truck cranes that were once more prevalent, however the rotating super structure of all cranes can present crush risks.

Just as the way we don't use our fingers as podgies, there are a number of safe ways of moving steel, crane components or machinery around without putting our bodies into a position where there can be a risk of being crushed.

A great topic for discussion amongst your workmates may be different methods of controlling these crush zone risks that you use on site.

Cheers for now and have a safe week!

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