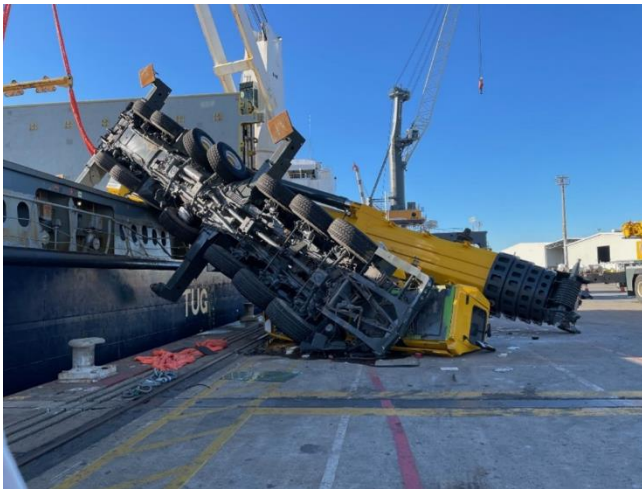


Greetings all. Today's Bulletin is about the risks of using basket hitches in dual lifts.

Earlier this year, while loading a 7-axle, [84-tonne mobile crane onto a ship at a Queensland wharf, a major accident occurred](#). The crane fell, landing partially on the ship and partially on the wharf, resulting in extensive property damage.

The failure was traced back to the lifting slings, which had been wrapped around the crane's outriggers, giving way mid-lift.

This incident shows just how critical it is to follow best practices when using basket hitches. In this case, the slings were likely not secured properly, or there was an issue with how they were interacting with the outriggers. This caused them to slip or fail, leading to the catastrophic drop of the crane.



When it comes to lifting heavy loads with cranes, using a basket hitch can already carry some risks if it doesn't bite on the load, but those risks get amplified when you're performing dual lifts—where two cranes are used to lift a single load and can introduce horizontal forces.

Here's why it's crucial to approach dual lifts with caution, especially when considering the use of basket hitches.

Increased Risk of Sling Movement

In dual crane lifts, non-vertical forces are often applied to the slings, making basket hitches more prone to slipping along the load. This sling movement can lead to a loss of stability, and in the worst-case scenario, the sling could even slip off its protective

padding. Once the load becomes unstable, the potential for failure increases dramatically.

See page 141 and 400 of the [NSW Dogging and Rigging Guide for an explanation](#).

Horizontal Loading Concerns

Dual lifts, like when lifting a crane via its outrigger beams, often introduce horizontal forces along the length of the load.

Basket hitches are particularly vulnerable to these forces, which can result in three big issues. The sling may experience a cutting action, or it could be pulled away from its protective measures, both of which can lead to a dangerous failure in the lift. Thirdly, the shifting of the sling will change how the centre of gravity of the load is supported by the rigging arrangement.

Reduced Load Control

Another factor to consider is the reduced control basket hitches offer compared to other methods, like choked hitches. In the dynamic environment of a dual lift, this lack of grip can make it harder to maintain the load's stability, increasing the likelihood of the load shifting or tilting during the operation.

Safety Considerations

The [Tower](#) and [Mobile Crane Codes of Practice](#) clearly warn against using basket hitches in dual lifts unless strict measures are taken to prevent sling movement. Given that dual lifts are already high-risk operations, choosing a more secure hitching method is often the smarter and safer choice.

Alternative Recommendations

If you're involved in a dual lift, there are ways to reduce the risks associated with basket hitches:

- [Flat web slings](#) can provide a flat contact surface over a wider area to better support the load than endless round slings.
- Use Choked Hitches: These provide a more secure grip on the load, making them less likely to slip compared to basket hitches.
- Implement Additional Safety Measures: If basket hitches are necessary, make sure that sling protectors are firmly secured, and consider using ones with lips to prevent slippage.



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- Consult Experts: For more complex dual lifts, it's wise to bring in a Lift Engineer. Their expertise will ensure that the most appropriate rigging method and crane movements are used for the specific lift.

For more information see the following:

[2024 Mobile Crane Code of Practice](#)

[2017 Tower Crane Code of Practice](#)

[NSW Dogging and Rigging Guide 2024](#)

[CICA Safety Bulletin #338 – Dual Crane Lifts](#)

[Crane Drop Incident – WorkSafe Qld Alert](#)

2025 Dates for the CICA Lift Supervisor Course have been released.

The CICA Lift Supervisor Course is a proactive initiative designed to enhance the safety and efficiency of crane operations on construction sites and industrial projects. This program introduces the role of a crane lift supervisor, who acts as a dedicated overseer of all crane-related lifting activities.

For more information and to book your place [click here](#).

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