



Work Safety Alert

Struck to Death by a Burst Fender Panel

- 1. Date of Accident :** December 2022
- 2. Place of Accident :** A depot in a container terminal
- 3. Summary :**

A worker while engaging in leak testing of a fender panel being filled with compressed air was thrown into the air as the panel suddenly ruptured. He sustained serious head injury and passed away on the same day. Another worker was hit by a component of the ruptured fender panel and injured.

4. Work Safety Alert for Contractors/ Proprietors/ Employers:

To ensure the safety of workers/ employees engaged in leak testing of assembly and its associated work, the contractors/ proprietors/ employers should provide and maintain a safe system of work which should include, but not limited to, the following:

- appointing an engineer/ competent person with adequate and relevant qualifications, competence and experience to conduct a task-specific risk assessment to identify all potential hazards associated with the work, taking into account the nature of work and the work environment in particular workpiece size, its test pressure and the test medium;
- formulating safe work methods and procedures for the leak testing with due regard to the results of the risk assessments, manufacturer's specifications/ instructions, and following the requirements of safety legislation and relevant safety guidelines to minimise the risks exposed to the workers/ employees;
- adopting water (or other fluid) as a medium for leak testing rather than pressurised air (or a gas) as far as practicable;



- among others, implementing the following control measures in leak testing where applicable:
 - selecting suitable tests tools, connectors and hose assemblies in compliance with manufacturer's specifications, national and international standards for their testing purpose and maintaining them properly;
 - ensuring the pressure system (including pressure regulator, gauge, valve, etc.) has been examined by a competent examiner before it is first used and at regular intervals;
 - ensuring that the test assembly is connected to a suitable pressure relief valve to prevent over-pressurising;
 - locating control valves and monitoring devices such as pressure gauges and flow meters away from the test area;
 - segregating the test assembly by (i) the use of a full enclosure; (ii) the provision of temporary barriers/ screens or (iii) exclusion of workers/ employees from a danger zone of the test area where measures (i) to (iii) are in order of priority for the selection;
 - properly carrying out the initial test and raising the test pressure in stages;
 - safely exhausting the pressure after a test before entering into the danger zone;
 - ensuring the work is performed by trained and competent workmen, and under the direct supervision of an engineer/ a person who is competent by virtue of his knowledge and practical experience; and
 - ensuring that all workers/ employees involved have access to the leak test instruction manual or relevant literature, possess adequate working knowledge of the test method, and are fully aware of the hazards involved in the process.
- providing all workers/ employees concerned with the necessary safety



information, instruction and training, and ensuring that they are familiar with the safe work procedures and safety measures; and

- establishing and implementing an effective monitoring and control system to ensure all safety measures are strictly followed.

5. Reference :

- [Safe Systems of Work](#)¹
- [Five Steps to Risk Assessment](#)¹
- [Five Steps to Information, Instruction and Training](#)¹

DISCLAIMER

This Work Safety Alert (“the Alert”) is issued at the earliest possible opportunity after a serious accident with a view to drawing the attention of interested parties to the general safety precautionary measures necessary to protect people engaging in similar work activities. The material contained in the Alert constitutes general guidance only. It does not reduce, limit, or replace, any legal obligations upon any person to comply with any statutory duties under relevant legislation. Users such as Managers and Supervisors should make their own evaluation of the information contained in the Alert to determine if it can be applied to their own situations and practices. The Labour Department does NOT accept any responsibilities for any loss or damage resulting from the use of or failure to use of the information on the Alert.

Note: The material contained in the Alert is not exhaustive, and will be supplemented/ adjusted where necessary if more relevant information comes to light.

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