

NEWS IN BRIEF

HIGH RISK LICENCES AND LOADING/UNLOADING

The EWPA has some good news on the problem of harmonisation regarding the need to hold a High Risk Licence to load or unload relevant plant. SA's adoption of the Harmonised Act on 1 January, 2013 saw this requirement removed. The person loading the high risk plant must still have the appropriate training in how to load and unload but no High Risk Licence is required. In NSW the EWPA has been advised an exemption is now in place, to be followed by a regulation change, returning this problem to the pre-WHS Act position. In other words, truck drivers can load and unload high risk items of plant without a High Risk Licence.

EWPA POLICY ON MAINTENANCE FOR OUT OF DATE EWPS

The EWPA now has the policy for maintenance for EWPs that are out of test date on the EWPA webpage (www.ewpa.com.au). This policy has

been developed by the EWPA National Executive to overcome the dilemma faced by members when asked to repair something on an EWP only to discover the unit requires an Annual or Major inspection. The policy contains a sample letter and service personnel are encouraged to use it. The EWPA advises it is better to have a fault repaired properly.

EWP SAFE USE AND INFORMATION PACK

The Safe Use Pack is on the EWPA webpage. Members are advised to encourage customers and major sites to download and use the latest version. It is there to guide the potential user in selecting the right EWP, taking into account the various hazards and risks. It also includes sections on operator training requirements as well as checklists for the condition of the EWP when it is delivered to site and the importance of checking the compliance plate.

Precautions regarding the use of harness anchorages on scissor lifts

By Peter Wenn, EWPA Technical Director

Harness anchorages are sometimes fitted to scissor lifts, and in some cases, anchorages are required by end users to be fitted to scissor lifts. This note provides guidance on the use of anchorages in these circumstances.

Fall arrest harness anchorages are required on boom type EWPs and it is a requirement to wear a fall arrest harness when operating a boom type EWP. The reason is to control the risk of ejection (catapult effect) or falling as a result of inversion of the work platform in the event of a levelling system failure.

Harness anchorages are not required to be fitted to scissor platforms and fall arrest harnesses are not required to be worn on scissors as the risks are not the same as they are in boom type work platforms. When used properly, there is no risk of falling from a scissor lift. In a scissor platform the harness and lanyard can also be a trip hazard and unduly restrict operator mobility.

Fall arrest vs. fall restraint

A fall arrest system (the harness lanyard and anchorage) is designed to arrest a free fall. As such, significant shock loads are imposed on the user and the equipment when the fall is arrested. The user is outside the platform and requires an immediate response in order to be recovered.

A fall restraint system is intended to prevent the user being exposed to a situation where a fall may occur. The forces required to restrain the user and keep them from a fall are considerably less than those that occur during a fall arrest.

The performance requirements

Anchorage must satisfy the strength requirements specified in AS1418.10. Hence fitting of anchorages by third parties should be discouraged. In addition, all mobile elevating work platforms that are fitted with fall arrest anchorages are required to remain stable and not overturn under test when subject to a fall arrest overturning test. Even if anchorages are fitted to scissors it should not be assumed the anchorage is a fall arrest anchorage, and in the absence of advice from the manufacturer, it must not be assumed the platform will not overturn in the event of a fall arrest.

What does this mean?

Unless advice has been obtained from the manufacturer, harness anchorage points on scissors should be treated as fall restraint only and the users must not place themselves in a situation where a fall may occur. The following applies irrespective of whether a harness is worn or not:

- Do not climb on the handrails – a harness does not give you the licence to do so.
- Ensure the platform gate is closed and locked – platform gates should automatically close and latch.
- Do not transfer from the platform at height, unless the requirements specified in AS2550.10 are observed.

Summary

Harness anchorages on scissor lifts should be considered as fall restraint anchorages, unless advice has been obtained from the manufacturer.

Personnel must not rely on the fall restraint system and must remain inside the platform with their feet only on the platform floor.

A fall arrest system does not enable the user to perform any work on a scissor lift that cannot be performed without wearing a harness.

Failure to observe these conditions could lead to death or serious injury.

HR

DIRECT TO YOUR DOOR!

At IPS we really do go the extra mile...

...to deliver replacement EWP parts direct to your door! We hold stock for all manufacturer makes and models... and OEM parts. You can order via phone, fax or online... we can deliver to you next day... and for a competitive price!

TELEPHONE:
BRISBANE (07) 3390 3222
SYDNEY (02) 9817 7610
www.ipsaustralia.biz

IPS

Wearing harnesses in scissor lifts

By Phil Middleton
EWPA Training Director

The issue of whether a fall-arrest harness is advisable or required, in scissor lifts has been popular in industry in recent times.

From time to time this topic emerges; should I be wearing a harness in a scissor lift. The scissor lift I'm operating has harness anchorage points. Does that mean I must wear a harness? Or, the site I'm working at requires I wear harnesses in scissor lifts, is this a legal requirement?

The reason this issue continues to raise its head is because many scissor lifts feature anchorage points for the attachment of a lanyard to a harness. Site managers, or WHS officers on site, see these anchor points and believe they require a harness. This reasoning is given weight by these same managers understanding the need for fall arrest harnesses in boom type EWP's and in certain cases it is recommended in the operator manual.

Harnesses are required to be worn in a boom type EWP to control the hazard of being ejected or catapulted out of the boom type EWP.

Australian Standard AS2550.10 states: "3.2 FALL ARREST SYSTEM OR RESTRAINT DEVICE - For boom type MEWP's, the type of fall arrest system or restraint device shall be appropriate for the work being carried out (see Clause 5.15).

"5.15 USE OF FALL ARREST SYSTEM OR RESTRAINT DEVICE - Fall arrest systems or restraint devices, complying with the appropriate parts of AS/NZS 1891 and selected in accordance with AS/NZS 1891.4, shall be worn and attached to the anchorage point(s) by everyone in a boom type MEWP unless it can be demonstrated



Phil Middleton

the risk of them being ejected from the platform through a component failure or other eventuality, example: catapult effect, is eliminated. Means of demonstration

In a scissor lift, there is no hazard of being ejected because there is no catapult effect from a scissor....

shall include a documented test. Unless otherwise specified by the manufacturer or determined by a competent person each anchor point shall only be considered suitable as an attachment for a single system/device."

In a scissor lift, there is no hazard of being ejected because there is no catapult effect from a scissor. A scissor has a platform that is attached directly to the lifting device. If an EWP of any type tips over, there is no harness that will save you.

Hence, when being requested or considering whether or not a harness is to be worn in a scissor lift, one must identify

what hazard the wearing of a fall arrest harness is controlling.

To add to the confusion, and depending upon the manufacturer, some operator's manuals recommend the wearing of a harness. However it does not state the type of system example: fall arrest or restraint. With this in mind, because EWP boom types were designed to be operated while wearing a harness, AS1418.10 requires the EWP undergoes a fall arrest overturning test. The overturning test is part of design testing and compliance with AS1418.10 and determines if the boom type EWP will overturn or not, in the event of the occupants being ejected from the basket and swinging freely from the harness attached to the EWP anchorage via the lanyard, outside the basket.

Operators of scissor type EWP's are not required to wear a fall arrest harness, because there is no identified risk of catapult. Hence there is no requirement for the manufacturers to submit their scissor lifts to tip over testing. Based upon the above reasoning the EWPA DOES NOT support or recommend the wearing of a fall arrest harness when operating a scissor type EWP unless there is a risk identified that operator may be catapulted or ejected from the platform.

For the immediate future, the EWPA will be contacting Australian suppliers of scissor lifts requesting they clarify any statements made in their operator manuals when referring to the use of fall arrest harnesses in scissor lifts. Manufacturers will be asked to clarify the fact scissor lifts have not undergone a fall arrest, overturning test as per AS1414.10-3.6.2.

For more information contact the EWPA on 02 9998 2222 or: www.ewpa.com.au **HR**

A new kind of materials hoist

Alimak Hek has introduced the latest addition to its vertical access range: the HEK TPL 300 and 500 light materials hoist.

Combining strength, flexibility and simplicity in the one affordable transport solution, the company said its TPL materials hoist is suitable for all vertical access needs, including building and scaffolding access, for new construction or existing refurbishment work.

Hot dipped galvanising, and a structure composed of folded and perforated

plates, ensures the rigid anti-slip walking surface of the TPL hoist remains the same over time, avoiding the need for surface maintenance.

The erection platform allows for smooth operation during mast erection and dismantling, while mast sections fixed with eyebolts ensure a safe and swift assembly.

Mounted on a tandem frame, the TPL's drive unit distributes pressure evenly to minimise mast wear and allow for smoother travel.

Installed in the heart of this drive unit, the Hek safety device and overload protection system ensures the safety of operators at all times.

Available in a 300kg or 500kg capacity, the new light range of TPL materials hoists have a maximum lifting speed of 24m/m and are designed to offer the most cost effective vertical transport solution on site.

For more contact: 03 8795 6789 or visit: www.alimakhek.com.au **HR**