



## ACCIDENT/INCIDENT ALERT

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# Unsafe A-frames used for transportation and storage of precast concrete panels

### The issue

A-frames are frequently used to transport and store precast concrete panels for use on construction sites.

Investigations by Department of Labour Health and Safety Inspectors based in Auckland have highlighted the following examples of unsafe practice with A-frames:

- Many are several years old and with little or no evidence of maintenance having been carried out on them
- Improper storage of frames causing hazards to those in the area
- No isolation controls to prevent employees going in between racks
- Evidence of improper/inadequate design specifications and/or a lack of engineer's design approval
- No supporting information to indicate the loading or tonnage A-frames can support
- Overloading of racks with too many panels. This results in the risk of overturning or collapse of frames.



Photo 1: Panels arriving on site with frames showing signs of damage. This method of transportation is common practice in New Zealand.



Photo 2: Concrete panels stacked, using current practice, on the frame, as the crane is about to lift it.

- Frames must be placed on clear, level ground to prevent them from rocking which may in turn result in failure of the frames or the panels sliding off.
- This risk is increased when the worker climbs the panel frame to attach the lifting equipment.



Photo 3: Empty A-frame

- Each user should have a safe working method statement and supplier's information in accordance with section 18(A) of the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992.
- Refer to the *Approved Code of Practice for the Safe Handling, Transportation and Erection of Precast Concrete* for further information.