



Scaffold truck with unsafe load in vehicle collision

INCIDENT

A truck loaded with scaffolding equipment and a car were involved in a collision while travelling on a public road. The occupant of the car was killed.

CIRCUMSTANCES

The truck was loaded with scaffolding material including tubes, planks and fasteners when it collided with another vehicle.

The load was secured with strops, but it was still able to move forward from the impact of the crash – generating enough force to partially lift the truck's cab off the chassis. The wooden scaffold planks gained so much momentum that some of them were thrown several metres clear from the truck. Two planks smashed through the rear window of the truck's cab, which could have had disastrous results if a passenger was sitting in the centre of the cab when the accident occurred.

INVESTIGATION

The Department of Labour agrees with the New Zealand Police Commercial Vehicle Investigation Unit's (CVIU) findings – that if the load had been secured against a certified cab-guard, the chances of the load moving and creating further risk to the occupants of the truck and other motorists would have been greatly reduced.

GUIDANCE

The Department of Labour recommends that a certified cab-guard¹ as specified in the Land Transport New Zealand Truck Loading Code is installed on vehicles transporting any goods or materials that could shift during an accident.

All commercial vehicles must be loaded, secured and checked by a competent person in accordance with the Land Transport New Zealand Truck Loading Code.

Scaffolding and Rigging New Zealand Incorporated (SARNZ) will place a reference to the Land Transport New Zealand Truck Loading Code in the next review of the "Best Practice Guidelines for Scaffolding in New Zealand" to ensure that this issue is adequately covered within the scaffolding industry.

The Best Practice Guidelines for Scaffolding in New Zealand is available for purchase from SARNZ, PO Box 31 067 Lower Hutt 5040. Phone 04 589 0253, website: www.sarnz.org.nz

Note: This material has been prepared using the best information available to the Department of Labour at the time of publication. Information may change over time and it may be necessary for you to obtain an update. This material is also only intended to provide general advice and does not constitute legal advice. You should make your own judgement about action you may need to take to ensure you have complied with your workplace health and safety obligations under the law.

1. A cab-guard is a structure attached to a vehicle that provides protection to the cab occupants from the effects of load impact; and may include a headboard.



Planks protruding through rear window over centre cab.

1

Picture 1: this picture shows the scaffold truck's cab with the driver's door open. In between the driver's and passenger's head rests, two wooden scaffold planks have smashed through the cab's rear window and came to rest upon the roof of the cab.



2

Picture 2: this picture shows the truck's cab from the passenger's door. On the truck deck, planks of wood and scaffold poles have come apart from the loading strops, pushing up against the back of the cab.



Materials Lifting Cab

3

Picture 3: a close-up of the truck's cab and storage deck shows that scaffold poles have slid underneath the truck's chassis, pushing the rear of the truck cab upwards.