



Learning Event



DRIVING

HAZARD

Physical
(moving object – trailer)

Collision

CONSEQUENCES

Actual: No harm to persons
Potential: This could have caused multiple fatalities

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO PREVENT TRAILERS DETACHING FROM MOVING VEHICLES?

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What Happened?

During heavy vehicle transit, a tri axle tag trailer carrying a padfoot road roller detached from a truck while travelling on a highway.

The detached trailer travelled into the opposite traffic lane, striking the guard rail on the opposite side of the road before coming to a stop in the middle of the highway. The trailer travelled 153 metres from the point of detachment.

No traffic was travelling in the opposite lane at the time. Load restraints on the trailer were maintained and the roller remained secured on the trailer in an upright position.

Why did it Happen?

- The main nut came away from the main pin of the flying saucer hitch component causing the trailer to detach from the truck.
- The trailer load relies on the main nut to maintain its position and once it came away, the trailer frame fell and detached from the truck.
- Significant wear was discovered on the main hitch nut thread, and the main pin had shards of thread still attached (flying saucer style hitch).
- Inspection of the main nut and clamping bolt were not included in regular mechanical maintenance of the trailer.
- The trailer manual does not reference maintenance / inspection requirements for the main nut component of the flying saucer hitch.

Watch Incident Review Presentation

What did they Learn?

- The trailer was hitched correctly to the truck. The components used to connect / disconnect the trailer are completely separate to the main nut and pin.
- Inspections of the truck and trailer are undertaken daily by the operator prior to use. Due to its location, it would not be possible for the operator to properly check the condition of the main nut - this could only be done through a qualified mechanical inspection.
- Verify that an effective trailer hitch inspection and maintenance regime is in place for trailers with this type of hitch.
- Adopt a requirement for two safety chain attachments to be installed on applicable trailers, in accordance with [Vehicle Standard \(Australian Design Rule 62/02\)](#).

IOGP Life-Saving Rules

- ✓ Understand and use safety critical equipment and procedures which apply to the task.
- ✓ Confirm that hazards are controlled and it is safe to start.



Ask yourself or your Crew:

- What checks do you conduct prior to starting a journey? Do they include trailers? Do you check your trailer attachment points for wear and tear?
- What process do you follow if damage or wear to your trailer attachment points is identified?
- Does your maintenance/inspection regime for trailers consider different hitch assembly types and potential failure mechanisms?
- Do you know how to confirm truck and trailer connection is completely engaged for every style of hitch assembly that you use?
- Do you regularly review your fleet to check that all your trailer hitch combinations are fit for purpose?

Further information

Safer Together - Land Transport Incident Review Panel: Towing Incidents (February 2023)



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Vehicle Standard (Australian Design Rule 62/02 – Mechanical Connections Between Vehicles) 2007



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Tri axle tag trailer and padfoot road roller post incident.



Main nut position on flying saucer hitch assembly.



Thread wear on main nut locking pin of flying saucer hitch assembly.

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