



Learning Event



DRIVING

HAZARD

Physical
(Moving object - trailer)

Collision

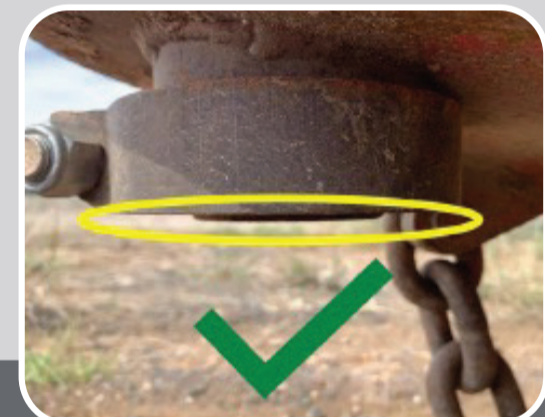
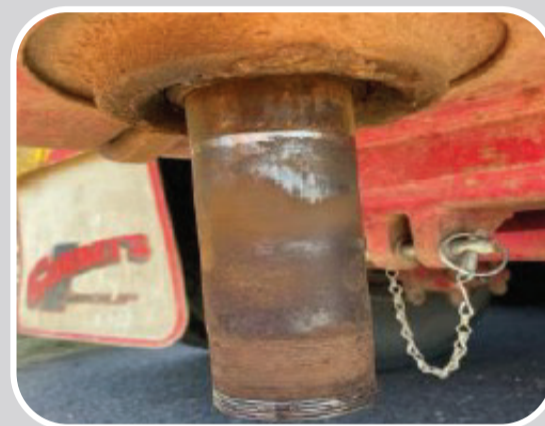
CONSEQUENCES

Actual: No harm to persons
Potential: This could have caused a fatality

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

What Happened?

While being towed by a tipper truck, a tag trailer carrying a 14 tonne excavator partially detached from the truck. The trailer remained connected only by the safety chains. Sparks from the detached trailer hitch contacting the road surface started a grass fire. The driver safely stopped the vehicle without further damage. A response team was mobilised to extinguish the grass fire.



Why did it Happen?

The truck had a 'flying saucer' hitch where a large pin is secured via a nut at the bottom of the hitch. The thread on the nut had become worn, causing the nut to fail and the pin to come loose during operation.

The design of the hitch made visual inspection of the wear difficult.

What did they Learn?

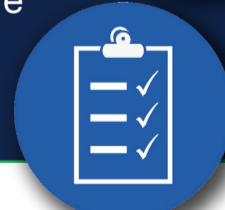
Flying saucer hitches can be prone to failure in certain conditions. They must be regularly maintained and inspected. Secondary retention is critical.

Driver competence / experience is a key control. The driver in this incident responded by gently braking in a straight line and bring the vehicle to a halt. This prevented further escalation.

Robust emergency response communication and capability is critical. The grass fire started by this event could have escalated significantly if a response crew had not been quickly notified and mobilised.

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? Do you check that secondary retention is in place?

How would you respond if a hitch fails while you are driving?

Do you know how to initiate emergency response procedures if needed when you are undertaking a journey?

Further information:



SCAN ME

Safer Together Learning Event Bulletin – Detached flying saucer hitch



SCAN ME

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



SCAN ME

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



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