



Learning Event



WORKING AT HEIGHT

HAZARD

Physical
(object at height)

Dropped Object

CONSEQUENCES

Actual: No harm to persons

Potential: This could have caused a fatality

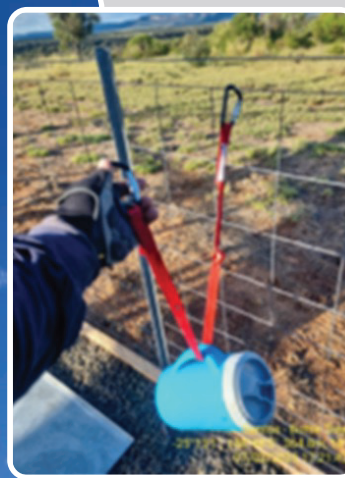
WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SECURE WORK EQUIPMENT TO PREVENT DROPPED OBJECTS WHEN WORKING AT HEIGHT?

What Happened?

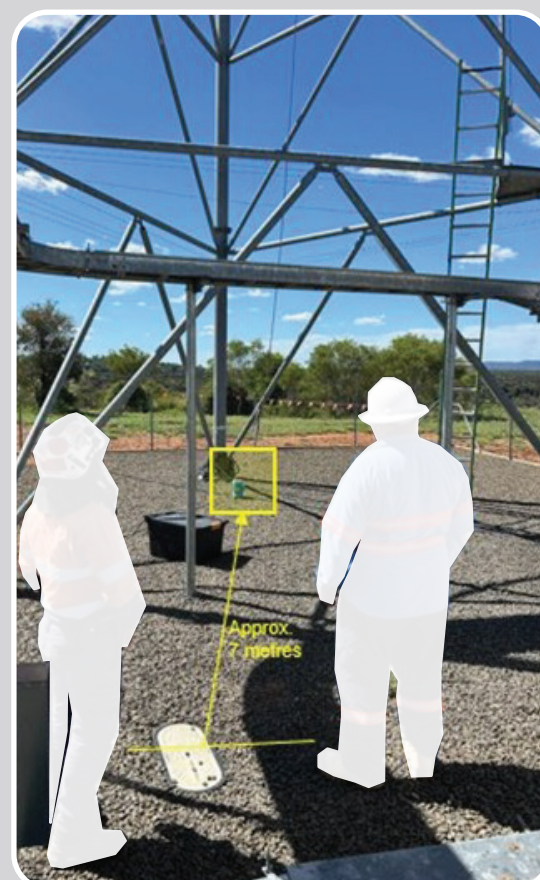
A rope access technician working at height on a communications tower stopped work to allow two workers to enter the Restricted Zone below to perform visual checks at ground level.

While waiting, the rope access technician reached for their tethered water bottle to move it. They unhooked one clip of the tether and when disconnected on one end, the bottle (weighing 0.5 kg) slipped off the tether and fell approximately 49 metres, landing within the internal footprint of the tower.

The two workers were standing in the Restricted Zone on the opposite side of the tower, approximately 7 metres away from where the water bottle hit the ground. Neither person was injured. DROPS calculations rate the potential consequence as fatal.



Standing position of two workers at ground level



Why did it Happen?

- Inadequate tethering method of the water bottle resulted in an open pathway, once one end of the tether was unclipped.
- The risk of dropped objects from non-work activities and non-related work equipment (e.g. water bottles) was not considered. Procedures did not specify method or equipment to be used for tethering of water bottles.
- Procedures allow for access into Restricted Zones however do not provide enough description on what activities can be carried out in the Restricted Zone.

What did they Learn?

- Standardise tethering methods across all sites.
- Apply Exclusion Zone to all movement at height.
- Review Controlled Zone Procedure to determine if Exclusion Zone and Restricted Zone definitions are clear and fit for purpose.

IOGP Life-Saving Rules

- ✓ Understand and use safety critical equipment and procedures which apply to the task
- ✓ Be positioned to avoid dropped objects
- ✓ Establish and obey barriers and exclusion zones
- ✓ Take action to secure loose objects and report potential dropped objects
- ✓ Secure tools and work materials to prevent dropped objects



Ask yourself or your Crew:

- What do you do at your worksite to prevent non-related work equipment (e.g. water bottles) being dropped when working at height?
- Do you perform regular inspections of equipment and work areas at your work site to identify dropped object hazard areas?
- When a potential dropped object is identified, do you and your work mates discuss the “what if” question? (e.g. What if that falls - could it hit people or plant? What is the worst outcome if it did?)
- When an actual or potential dropped object is identified, do you report it to your supervisor?

Further information:



SCAN ME

Safer Together:
Assist & Assure



SCAN ME

Safer Together:
DROPS Management
System Self-Assessment
Guideline



SCAN ME

Dropped Object
Prevention Scheme
(DROPS) –
Recommended Practice



SCAN ME

Dropped Object
Prevention Scheme (DROPS) –
Recommended Guidelines
for the Safe Use of Tools &
Equipment at Height

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