

Contact to person between roller and paver

Arrow indicating the location of the paver crank handle into which the roller pressed the contractor

Details

In August 2013, 3 ½ hours into the night's work, a 224 steel drum roller made contact with a contractor standing between the roller and the paver. The roller operator, with over 20 years asphalt experience, had rolled approximately 150 meters of asphalt which equates to approximately 110 passes.

The roller moved towards the rear left hand side of the paver, which was paving at approximately 3 meters per minute whilst waiting for another load of asphalt.

The roller operator then breached the 3 meter exclusion zone. Whilst attempting to put the roller in reverse, it pressed a contractor, standing at the rear of the paver, between the paver crank handle and the front part of the roller. As the paver was still travelling forward, the pressure on the contractor was released almost immediately.

The roller operator did activate the Emergency Stop button, however contact had already been made between the roller, contractor and paver crank handle.

Immediate medical attention was sought for the contractor who was released that night following assessment with only minor bruising to the hip and groin region.

Explanation

Following a controlled re-enactment of the incident, a mechanical fault was discounted as to being the root cause of the incident. It would appear that the operator panicked as he approached the rear of the paver (inside the exclusion zone) and accidentally placed the lever in the forward position instead of reverse.

The roller brake setting was not set on "hard" which would have significantly decreased the braking distance

Safety Tips

1. Operators must be familiar with the equipment they operate – conduct plant specific Verification of Competency to confirm
2. Roller operators should decrease their speed when approaching the rear of the paver
3. The roller brake setting should be on "hard" which significantly decreases the breaking distance
4. SWMS / SOP must prescribe exclusion zones (i.e. 3m behind paver)
5. SWMS / SOP must prescribe the approach speed to plant / people (i.e. approach at 3kph – half normal)
6. Investigate alternate proximity detection / warning devices (i.e. laser light projected from rollers)
7. Pedestrians, persons on foot and contractors should be removed from plant exclusion zones

AAPA has prepared this Safety Alert from industry safety alerts and incident reports to provide assistance to members and the public in general. This Safety Alert is a reference point and should be combined with other information sources, relevant government legislation and other industry related materials in risk and hazard identification and in developing safety practices, policies and procedures. v4