

# SAFETY ALERT



AUSTRALIAN STEEL INSTITUTE  
SAFETY GROUP

"Sharing incident learnings amongst ASI member companies"

"A vision of a safer steel industry"

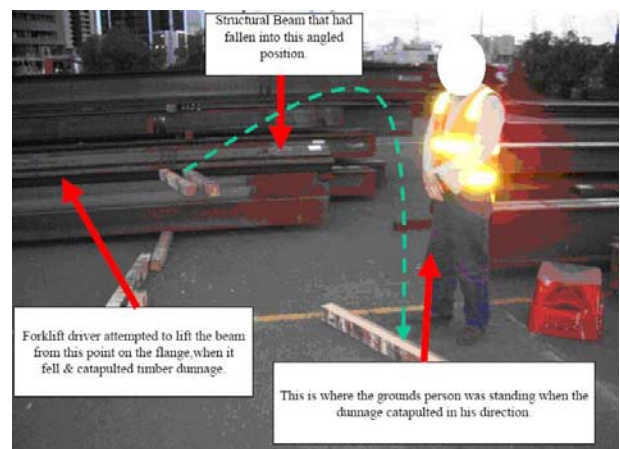
**Number:** SA0028  
**Subject:** **Catapulting Timber Hits Grounds Person**  
**Date:** October 2007

## Incident:

A forklift operator was attempting to "right" a bundle of structural steel in a stack that had slipped off the timber dunnage and come to rest in an angular position. In doing so the forklift driver proceeded to lift the bundle by placing the tynes under the top flange. The grounds person was standing to the side of the forklift, placing him seven metres from the forklift and four meters from the stack, ready to put the timber into position to separate the bundles (refer photo).

Due to the awkward position of the bundle, the flange tip slipped off the tynes, causing the bundle to fall back to its original position. The force from the bundle resulted in a piece of timber dunnage being catapulted back towards the grounds person, bouncing off the ground and hitting him in the face.

Injury Description: Abrasion to mouth and nose from 100 x 100 mm timber dunnage.



## Key Lessons:

- 1) The importance of assessing the risk of non-routine tasks (i.e. prior to attempting to rectify a situation that is abnormal).
- 2) This is the second incident of this type, with a similar incident occurring Jan 07 where another grounds person at another site was struck in the face by catapulting dunnage. Learning's from other incidents need to be critically reviewed and applied.
- 3) Never assume your position is safe. "Expect the unexpected" and always be on your guard.

## Recommendations: (maximum of 3)

- 1) Maximise separation of people and mobile equipment. (Trial of a 10-metre exclusion zone is underway at the site concerned).
- 2) Create a stacking guideline for this, and all products handled including associated risks.
- 3) Job Safety Analysis to be undertaken for all non-routine work including rectifying deviations to normal process.

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