

Logistics Safety Guideline

Preventing Falls Off Trucks

Simple Rules for Height Safety on Trucks & Trailers...

1

**Avoid Getting Up at All,
If You Can!**



2

Use Fall Protection Systems



3

**Wear Head Protection
and Chin Straps**



4

Never Step Backwards



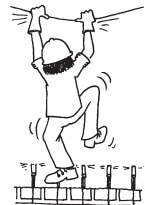
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Never Tension Chains Close to the Edge



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**Always Keep Your Head Above
Your Shoulders**



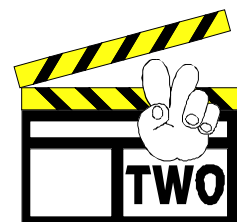
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Never Climb over Tarped Products



8

Never JUMP!



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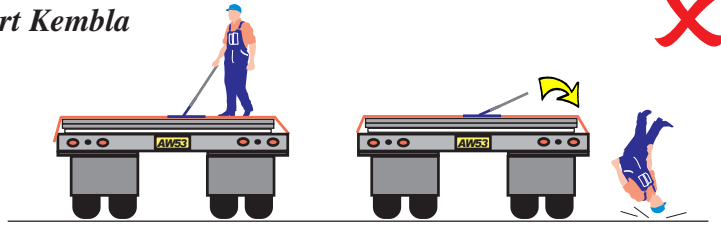
Take 2

Logistics Safety Guideline

Preventing Falls Off Trucks

Case Study 1 - Injury in Port Kembla

At a Coil Processing site, a truck driver narrowly escaped serious head injuries when he fell off his truck.



The driver was “dogging down” a load of flat bar when the “cheater bar” used to lever the load binder slipped. The driver lost his balance and fell over the side of the trailer deck.

Fall prevention platforms were not in use at the time.

The driver sustained a severely bruised shoulder and several stitches to the back of the head.

Key Issues:

- Working on top of the trailer when not necessary places drivers in a position of risk i.e. falling off the truck.
- All loads should be assessed to be secured from ground level.
- “Dogs” and “cheater bars” are dangerous, even when handled correctly. Alternate load binders can be substituted for “dogs”.
- The use of a platform prevents falls injuries.

What Does the Law Say?

All states in Australia have “Working at Heights” legislation when working above 1.8 or 2 metres. Check with your states’ Work Safety Authority for more details. For example:

“Workcover NSW - Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2001, Working at Heights (Chapter 4, Part 4.3, Division 6, Clause 56)” states that:

“an employer must ensure that risks associated with falls from a height are controlled by... (at minimum) ...other forms of physical restraints that are capable of arresting the fall of a person from a height of more than 2 metres”.

Although the tray of a truck, being typically 1.4 metres from ground level, is not legally classified as working at heights, **serious injuries or even death can result from “Falling Off Trucks”** (as seen in Case Study 1 above and proceeding Case Studies 2 and 3).

Also, there are many cases where **standing on product on the trailer places drivers at heights greater than 2 metres.**

Logistics Height Safety Policy

All logistics sites should adopt a Height Safety Code. The code must require sites to implement systems to ensure that no driver is on the deck of a truck without fall protection.

This guideline provides information for drivers and sites to help construct their own Height Safety Policies, or compare the information against existing policies.

To prevent falls from trucks the following different methods can be implemented:

- Eliminating the need to be on the truck.
- Using Safety Steps or similar to allow drivers to access truck decks from the ground.
- Mobile stairs to allow workers to view loading without being on the truck deck.
- Fall prevention platforms.
- Overhead fall prevention systems.



Logistics Safety Guideline

Preventing Falls Off Trucks

1 Plan to Avoid Getting Up at All!

Be aware that every time you are up on the deck of the truck you are at risk of a fall. Falls off trucks are one of the greatest sources of worker injuries.

The key issues are:

- Avoid being on the trailer if possible.
- Ask **“Can it be done at ground level?”**
- **ALL** work that can be done at ground level, should be done so.

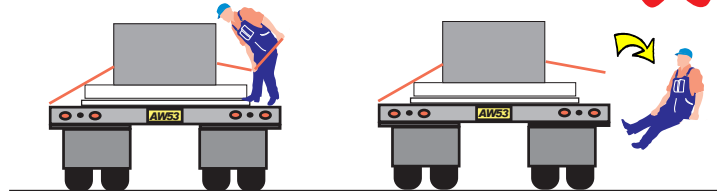


Case Study 2 - Near Miss in Westernport

A truck driver was lucky to walk away from a fall from a truck whilst fitting chains to a Bore Horizontal Coil.

The driver was on the trailer threading chains through a Bore Horizontal Coil on a “Robbo Rack” when he slipped, lost his balance and fell off the truck.

The driver was lucky not to sustain a serious injury in the impact with the concrete floor.



Key Issues:

- Working on top of the trailer when not necessary places workers in a position of risk i.e. falling off the truck.
- Bore Horizontal coils in Robbo Racks can be secured from the ground. Some simple equipment maybe needed. e.g. Safety Step.

2 Use Fall Protection Systems



If you must get on the trailer, use the available fall prevention or fall arrest systems.

- Specialised Platforms allow safe access to the vehicle deck.
- Fall arrest systems can be put in place, (eg. an overhead cable and harness system) to prevent serious falls from vehicle decks.
- If there is no platform or Fall Arrest system available use mobile stairs or ladders that comply with the Australian Standards.

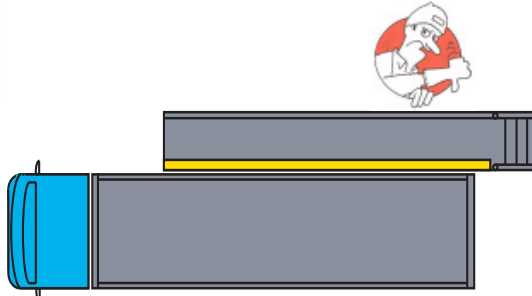
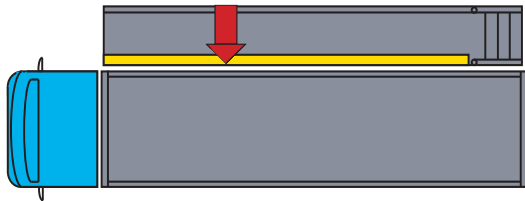
Logistics Safety Guideline

Preventing Falls Off Trucks

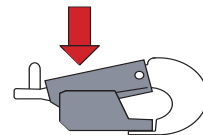
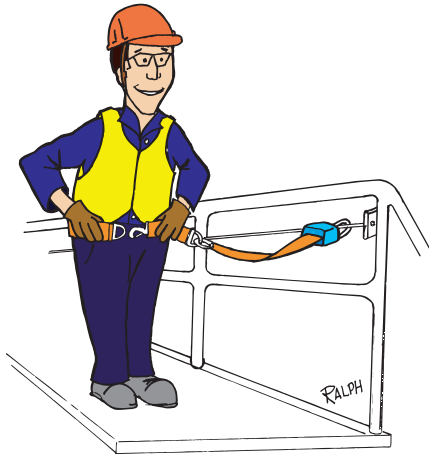
Using Safe Loading Access Platforms

- A** Ensure that the Platform is correctly aligned and firmly against the vehicle and the outer platform wheels locked.

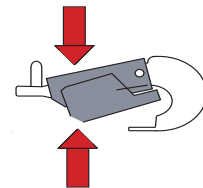
Platform hard against Truck



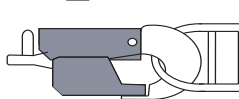
- B** Access the platform and attach waist belt.



Squeeze the top lever first.

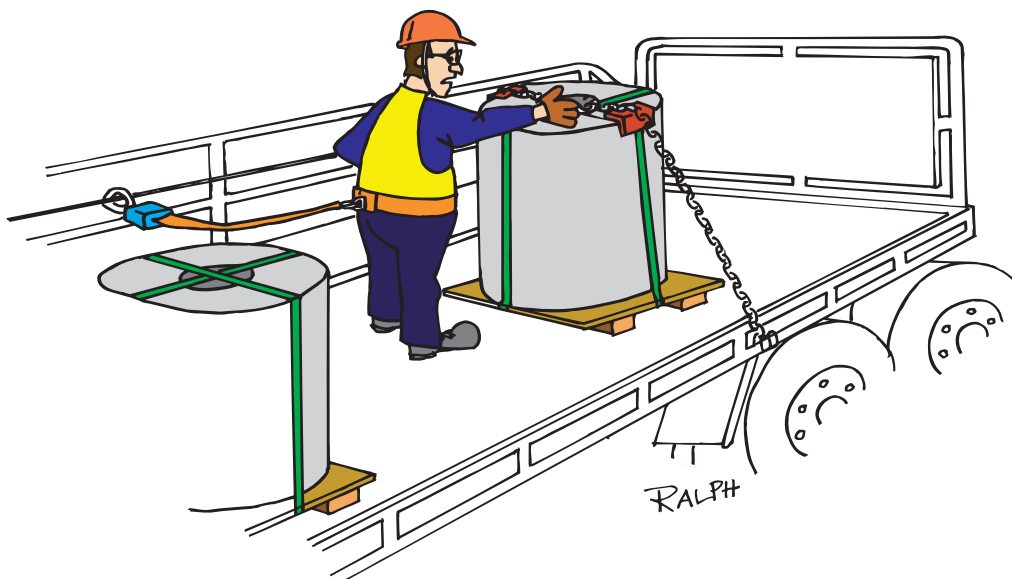


Hold the first lever down whilst squeezing the lower lever.



Clip the D ring into the hook. Release both levers.

- C** Check waist belt is secure and commence work on the truck deck. Only disconnect the waist belt once back on the access platform.



Logistics Safety Guideline

Preventing Falls Off Trucks

3 Wear Head Protection with Chin Strap when on Truck Deck

Falls off Trucks often result in fatal head injuries.
Wear a Helmet with Chin Strap when:

- On the truck deck at any time, including when using a Platform or Fall Arrest System.
- Whilst restraining and unrestraining loads.

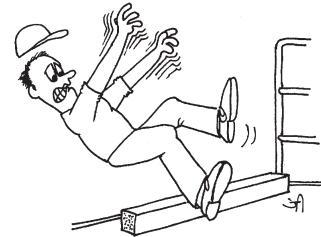


Helmets with Chin Straps have prevented many serious injuries

4 Never Step Backwards

Always step forward so that you can see:

- Where you are going;
- What you are stepping on; and
- How close you are to the edge.



Watch out for trip and slip hazards on trailers such as timber dunnage, equipment, product stacks and oil etc. Head protection should include a chin strap.

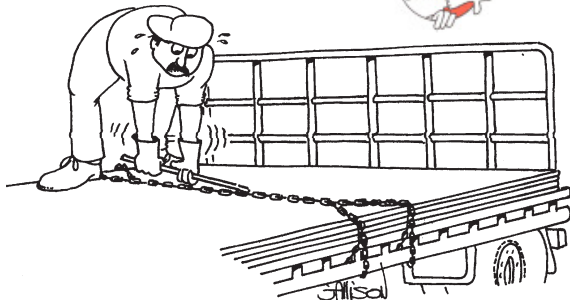
5 Never Tension Chains Close to the Edge

- Tension chains or straps from the ground wherever possible; or
- Use available platforms to stand on whilst securing the load.
- Ensure firm footing while securing loads.

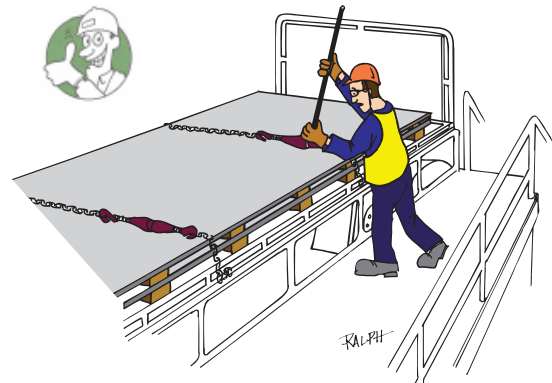
- **Never stand near the trailer's edge.**

If you absolutely must stand on the load to tension chains:

Stand in the centre of the truck and arrange the load binder so that if you slip, you do not fall off the trailer.



Do not tension chains near the Trailer edge - use a platform or tension chains from the ground



Tension chains using Platform for plate loads

Logistics Safety Guideline

Preventing Falls Off Trucks

6 Always Keep Your Head Above Your Shoulders!



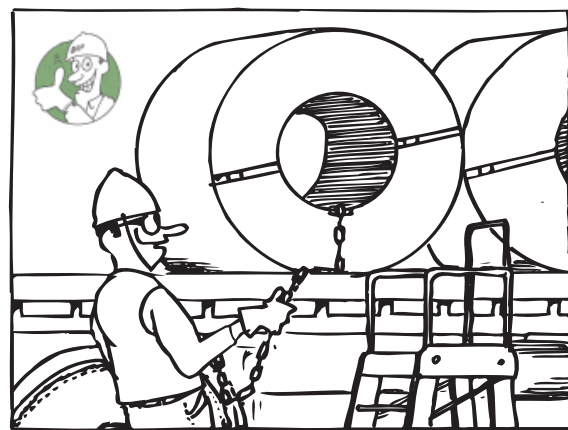
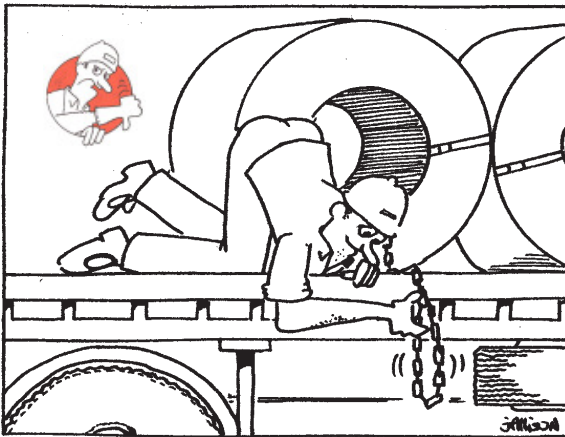
Be aware that many fall injuries are sustained when people have their head below their shoulders.

If you keep your head above your shoulders then you are not bending your back and you must kneel down. This will prevent a rush of blood to the head which can cause an overbalance.

“If you cannot do the job without keeping your head above your shoulders, then find another way of doing it... It stops you from going head over heels!”

The key issues are:

- Do not lean over the side of the trailer whilst on the tray to anchor chains, do it from the ground!



- Do not bend over to place polyurethane edge protectors on loads, kneel down or even better still, do it from the ground.
- Do not bend over to pick up timber dunnage or other equipment from the deck of the trailer.
 - ⇒ Bend your knees and keep the natural curve of your spine
 - ⇒ Arrange dunnage and other equipment from the ground where possible.



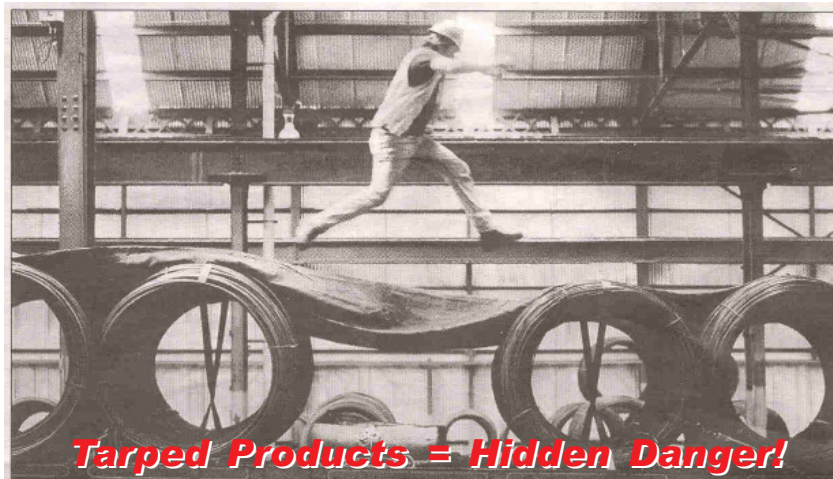
Use Platforms to attach load restraint and restrain load.

Logistics Safety Guideline

Preventing Falls Off Trucks

7 Never Climb over Tarped Products

- Be aware that climbing on product on the trailer may place you at heights which is in breach of “Working at Heights” legislation.
- Products covered by tarps may have gaps that you cannot see. As a result you may twist your ankle, or even worse lose your balance and fall off the truck.



8 Never Jump!

- On or off the trailer - you could sprain your ankle and the constant jarring could result in chronic back injury.
- Between the truck and trailer.
- Between trailers.
- On or off loading platforms or docks.
- Between product stacks.
- From forklifts or cranes.



Logistics Safety Guideline

Preventing Falls Off Trucks

9 Take 2

All too often incidents occur as a result of someone hurrying or taking a short cut (recall Case Study 1), or because their mind was not on the job.

So **Take 2** minutes to think about and check the risks of the task ahead of you, no matter how simple it seems.



Ask yourself...

“What Can Bite Me?”

(Cause me harm).

If you have had a problem, it is essential you Stop and **Take 2**, before trying to correct the problem.

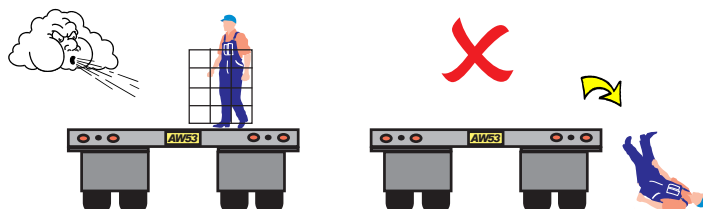
Things also tend to go wrong when something is different, or out of the ordinary. So prior to starting ask yourself...

“What is Different About Today?”



Case Study 3 - Fractured Shoulder Blade at Newcastle Logistics Terminal

A truck driver broke his shoulder blade when he fell off his trailer whilst setting up.



In setting up the trailer, the driver picked up a gate (considered heavy) and was walking backwards while carrying the gate. At this moment a gust of wind blew up which caused him to lose his balance and fall off the side of the trailer to the ground.

The driver sustained a fractured shoulder blade and a cracked rib, and was off work for 2 months.

Key Issues:

- Working on top of the trailer places workers at risk of falling. “Never step backwards”.
- Take 2 - prevailing weather conditions, think of the risks, ask “What is different about today?”
- Manual Handling - if gates are heavy use a forklift or other lifting devices to handle them.

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