



Safety Alert

Fall from Safety Step Causes LTI

Incident Description

A tyre servicemen was installing wheel nuts above shoulder height on a CAT 789 Pos 4 wheel, while standing on an approved safety step (~ 500mm in height). When the air operated rattle gun slipped off the wheel nut, he lost his balance and fell backwards onto the concrete floor in the tyre bay landing on his lower back.

He subsequently was taken to the hospital by ambulance where his injuries were confirmed to be a pinched nerve in his lower back. While this incident resulted in a lost time injury, it had the potential to have far more serious consequences.



Recommendations

Before commencing a task involving the use of any tooling while required to stand on a platform to gain extra height, perform a JHA determining the best step or platform to be used for the task. Minimum checkpoints to consider in the JHA:

1. Height of the task - is the platform/step appropriate for the task e.g. does it require a guardrail, and does it meet the sites' 'working at heights' requirements for use.
2. Platforms/steps should be inspected prior to use – platforms/steps must be approved, fit for purpose, undamaged, clean and not slippery.
3. Positioning of the platform/step and stability of the platform/step while carrying out the task – ensure your centre of mass remains over the platform/step at all times i.e. consider reach limitations – how much bending, sideways reach, overreaching does the task require, and does the platform/step provide adequate stability for the person should he become unbalanced.

Go safe – always.

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