

Fatality Investigation Report

Worker Crushed
February 16, 2013

The contents of this report

This document reports OHS' investigation of a fatal accident in February 2013. It begins with a short summary of what happened. The rest of the report covers this same information in much greater detail.

Incident summary

On February 16, 2013 at approximately 11:30 pm a wheel loader operator was fatally injured when he was crushed between the loader he had been operating and a nearby forklift.

Background information

Ainsworth Engineered Canada Limited Partnership (Ainsworth) operates the second largest single-line oriented strand board (OSB) plant in the world, which is located approximately 25km south of Grande Prairie, Alberta. The plant operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on a four shift rotation, employing approximately 173 workers. Ainsworth's Grande Prairie employees work with and around powered mobile equipment every shift, both inside and outside of the plant in adverse weather conditions. The Ainsworth Grande Prairie facility received its Certificate of Recognition (COR) in 2000.

The loader operator was employed with the Ainsworth Grande Prairie Plant for 18 years. Since being hired in 1995 the loader operator held several positions, both in the plant and outside in the log yard. In 2012 he became qualified to operate the Volvo L150E Wheel Loader (Bucket/Grapple), which he was operating at the time of the incident. The training and qualification requirements for these pieces of equipment were administered and recorded by Ainsworth.

The forklift operator had been employed by the Ainsworth Grande Prairie Plant for 8 years and had been operating a forklift since being hired. One of the forklift operator's responsibilities on February 16, 2013 was to dump garbage bins at the Ainsworth Grande Prairie Plant. The temperature on the day of the incident ranged from 1.6°C at 6:00p.m. to 0.1°C at 11:00 p.m. with a mix of rain and snow throughout the evening.

Equipment and materials

Volvo Wheel Loader (Loader) – L150E, Unit #122

The Loader (loader) was manufactured in 2004 and had 3871 hours on the meter.



Figure 1. Side view of the loader that was involved in the February 16, 2013 incident.

Lift Truck Model (Hyster 110 Forklift), Unit #1201

The Hyster 110 forklift was being used to haul waste material from inside the plant to the garbage bins located outside.



Figure 2. The blue arrow shows the area in which the Loader Operator was hooking the cable to the forklift at the time of the incident.

Sequence of events

At approximately 11:00 p.m. on February 16, 2013 the forklift left the OSB plant with a bin of garbage attached to the forks. He proceeded outside to the large garbage containers located on the north west corner of the building. The forklift operator pulled up to the garbage bins to dump the load. The forklift became stuck in this location due to the ice under the tires.

The forklift operator requested, over the radio, that a load of gravel be brought to his location. The forklift operator was informed that a loader operator was coming to assist him. The forklift operator waited at the garbage bins with the forklift until the loader arrived.

The loader operator drove the loader to the garbage bins, arriving at approximately 11:15 p.m. The forklift operator asked the loader operator if he could get some gravel for the area so he could back the forklift out. After a discussion it was agreed by both the operators that they would tow the forklift out of the area before putting down the gravel.

The loader operator backed up the loader until he was approximately 2.4 meters from the forklift. He lowered the bucket of the loader to the ground, put the loader transmission in neutral and exited the loader. On this loader the parking brake will automatically activate when the engine is switched off. This guarantees that the loader's braking system will be initiated when it is in park. The loader was left running when the loader operator got out of the loader to hook up the tow line to the forklift.

The forklift operator retrieved the cable from the back of the loader and started to hook the cable to the tow hook on the back of the forklift, but was having trouble securing it properly. The loader operator took the cable from the forklift and proceeded to show him how he hooks the cable to the forklift. The forklift operator stood up and stepped to the side and saw the loader rolling back at them. The loader contacted the loader operator on his left side and pinned him between the loader and the forklift.

The forklift operator got into the loader and moved it forward a short distance. He then ran back to the forklift and radioed for first aid and an ambulance. The control room operator called 911. STARS air ambulance took the loader operator to the Grande Prairie Queen Elizabeth II hospital where he later succumbed to his injuries.

Completion

A review for enforcement action was completed on August 27, 2013 and it was determined that prosecution or an administrative penalty were not appropriate based on the circumstances surrounding this incident.

Final Report

Signatures

Original Report Signed

July 9, 2015

Lead Investigator

Date

Original Report Signed

August 5, 2015

Manager

Date

Original Report Signed

August 6, 2015

Director

Date