

Safety Alert

This important Health & Safety information is for our external partners.
Please discuss with your teams, if relevant.



Uncontrolled Vehicle Movement

Alert Number: SP0548-1459

Distribution: External Partners

Incident Ref No: 32727

Key Message

Many vehicles within Ausgrid's Medium and Heavy Fleet have handbrakes that are either encased by a retractable sleeve or a locking collar. These handbrakes are released by lifting the collar or sliding the sleeve forward allowing the lever to release. The collar or sleeve around the handbrake can be inadvertently released by items getting caught on the handle, for example, straps from bags or EWP remote control handles. Items placed on top of the handbrake pose a risk of releasing the handbrake allowing the vehicle to potentially move uncontrolled. This has the potential for a fatality, or to critically injure of a fellow worker.

Description of incident or hazard

There have been two notable incidents relating to the release of handbrakes. The most recent, a worker was replacing EWP remote control batteries inside the EWP driver's cabin. Sitting in the driver's seat, the worker placed the controls upside down over the handbrake, the handles of the remote control covered the handbrake lever. After changing the batteries, when removing the remote control from this position, the handle from the remote control has become entangled with the handbrake lever. Inadvertently the handbrake sleeve has released, disengaging the vehicle park brake. Subsequently the EWP has rolled forward a short distance before the handbrake was re-applied.



Extent of impact

No injuries were sustained or damage to assets.

Immediate action taken (or to be taken) to eliminate or control the risk

While an engineered solution is being considered to prevent a reoccurrence of this type, the following is to be implemented:

- When the driver of the vehicle is still within the cabin (driver's seat), the passengers and/or fellow workers must either remain within the cabin or stand a safe distance until the driver has alighted from the vehicle cabin.
- Wheel chocks must be put in place only after the driver has engaged the Power Take Off (PTO) and all staff have alighted from the cabin of the truck.
- Staff are to remain vigilant around ensuring the cabin is not entered when staff are setting up the vehicle with wheel chocks and dunnage pads.

External Safety Alert - This information is for our contractors and industry partners to discuss with their teams, if relevant.

- Maintain good housekeeping within the driver's cabin and refrain from storing or placing objects on or over the handbrake.

For further information

Contact and discuss with your Ausgrid Contract Manager or email contractdelivery@ausgrid.com.au.

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