

11 Sep 2018

Crane owners, operators urged to conduct safety checks

Crane owners and operators need to check a key component following the preliminary results of a WorkSafe investigation into the cause of an incident which led to the death of a construction worker in Box Hill.

WorkSafe investigators suspect that the failure or malfunction of the hoist rope termination assembly, also known as the wedge socket, is likely to have been a contributory factor in the incident.

A man in his late 40s died, a man in his 20s sustained life-threatening injuries and a third man sustained non-life threatening injuries when a kibble containing concrete fell from a Raimondi hammerhead tower crane and struck three workers, shortly after noon on Thursday.

WorkSafe notified Clark Cranes of its findings on Friday. The company, which both owns and sells Raimondi cranes, has issued a cease work on all its Raimondi cranes until a safety audit has been conducted.

An independent expert engaged by WorkSafe is working to verify that Clark Cranes' audit has been conducted correctly. There are presently 65 Raimondi cranes operating in Victoria.

WorkSafe has also advised OHS regulators in other states of its findings.

WorkSafe Acting Executive Director of Health and Safety Paul Fowler said Thursday's tragic incident was serious enough to warrant checks on all cranes.

"The component which we believe contributed to this incident is an integral part of the hoist rope system on most cranes," Mr Fowler said.

"While there is no reason at this point to suggest this may be faulty on any other crane, a tragic incident such as the one which occurred on Thursday should prompt all crane owners and operators to inspect each and every crane in the state.

"It is essential that all hoist-rope termination assemblies are inspected to ensure they are appropriately installed, compliant and functioning according to manufacturer's specifications.

"If crane operators or owners are unsure about the safety of any crane component they should seek specialist advice."

"We have been liaising with crane and construction industry groups, and interstate regulators, about this issue since Friday."

Mr Fowler said companies operating cranes also needed to review their systems of work

to ensure that, as far as reasonably practicable, loads did not travel over or were suspended above workers.