

Category 1: Work Health and Safety

Stabiliser Fall Protection

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2022 AustStab Awards of Excellence

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Overview and Objectives

- Downer encountered a challenge during works on a Tier 1 Civil Contractors' site regarding safe access to the top of a WR250 stabiliser
- The Downer operator accessed the top of the machine via OEM's instructions and engaged the fall protection on the non-operator side of the stabiliser in order to maintain filters
- Whilst in the process, a representative of the client flagged down the operator who safely returned to ground and raised the issue that the OEM's fall protection system was not sufficient to meet industry and site standards

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Initiative Undertaken

- Downer set off to explore potential ways to improve the OEM's fall protection system, in order to comply with site and industry requirements
- The wider Downer team including operations, supervisors, stabilising managers and workshop team we all involved with the initiative

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Operating Environment and Context

- During field works there are times when maintenance teams and/or operators need to access the top of stabilisers to conduct preventative maintenance and servicing
- The manufacturer's system involves a one-off safety rail, lanyard system and top doors for fall protection – the original system does not offer complete fall protection along the sides and back of the stabiliser
- When an operator is accessing the top of the stabiliser they are open to falling from heights
- In addition, continuous lanyard and harness maintenance along working at heights training is required to use the lanyard system

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Specific Challenges

- Why is Downer doing this?
- Working with manufacturer to above avoid drilling and bolting into stabiliser body
- Compliance with Australian Standards
- Transition between stairs and top of stabiliser, trip hazards
- How to develop a system which can be installed locally with ease

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Key Points

- AS 1657 Compliant System was engineered with an external party
- Check valve arrangement if failure of air system occurs handrails won't come down
- Changes to part of the system to achieve transition between steps and top of stabiliser
- A bolt on easy to install packed system was created to be distributed to such stabilisers for installation cross the country

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Evidence of Success

- The system has been endorsed by the manufacturer
- Nationwide roll-out of the fall protection system is underway where local workshop teams can unpack and install the system with ease
- System complies with AS1657



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Practical Use

- The implemented fall protection system is simply activated by the on/off switch of the air valve system
- If the air valve system fails and the rails are in use, they will remain in position and not collapse
- System is bolt on to existing stabiliser bolt holes and comes in packs which can be distributed across the country for easy installation



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