

MultiServ reduce the risk of slips and trips

Reducing falls from vehicles case study 2

This case study is part of a series, which give examples of good practice to reduce injuries due to falls from vehicles through sensible management of health and safety risks in the workplace.

The challenge

MultiServ, a steel logistics company, needed to reduce the risk of slips and trips for employees using the fifth wheel of articulated units and needing to access the load area of flatbed trailers during off loading of steel product.

How they did it

MultiServe reduced the risk of falling from the catwalk of tractor units and the load area of flatbed trailers by:

- fitting a large access platform of consistent level over the whole fifth wheel area to form a safe catwalk;
- improving visibility by providing access steps painted with yellow grit-impregnated paint, also making them less slippery;
- providing handholds on the trailer steps;
- adding grab handles to the steel posts used as load restraints on the flatbed; and
- painting yellow lines with the grit-impregnated paint so the driver can see the edge of the trailer easier, giving it a tactile feel.



Figure 1 Earlier version of the catwalk with smaller area for the feet and changes of level that are more likely to cause operators to trip and fall.

The company now check and maintain their improvements as part of regular vehicle maintenance schedules.



Figure 2 A single level platform forms the catwalk and also covers the top of the fuel tank. There is a good handhold and access steps are set in the fuel tank. These will need to be kept clean from any diesel contamination.

Results

The company's vehicles are now fitted with a level access platform over the whole fifth wheel area, together with a safe means of access to the trailer for any new vehicles purchased. This has added to the cost of a new unit, but has eliminated slips and trips.

The overall safety programme implemented by the company has:

- reduced lost-time accidents from 30 million to two million hours;
- increased year on year profitability as a consequence of reduced accidents, lower vehicle downtime, reduced liability claims (some costs are first year costs only eg production of their own safety video, added costs for fifth wheel catwalks); and
- contributed to staff feeling much safer at work.