

Safety Alert

Operator Fractured Leg Whilst Exiting Excavator

What happened?

An excavator operator working at the bottom of an embankment was tracking into position to commence backfill to a pipe when the 8 ton Takeuchi excavator moved in the loose ground. The operator grounded the bucket and decided to investigate the situation. Upon exiting the cab of the machine backwards and using a three point contact placed his foot on what he believed was the interim step within the track and lost his footing causing him to fall. The operator fell a distance of one metre and broke his left tibia.

Investigation findings

The position the machine was in at the time the operator egressed meant the intermediate step was not available for him to place his foot on a sound footing.

The operator's right hand was on the door handle and not the recommended handrails causing the door to unlatch and destabilised the operator's egress.

The design had changed and this was the second time the construction of this platform was being carried out.

The initial planning of the work did not include the installation of the pipe before the platform build out commenced causing some restriction to the work area on the subsequent return to install the pipe.

Recommendations

When mounting and dismounting the cab, firstly ensure the cab door is aligned with tracks to allow the use of the interim step built into the tracks.

Always face the access system and maintain a three point contact with the recommended handrails and steps while getting on and off the machine. Keep steps and platform clean.

Ensure a full and final design is in place before starting works.

Ensure the works is fully planned, sequenced for safe construction.

Signed:



Date of incident 15/02/16

