



OH&S Bulletin

TILT-UP PANEL COLLAPSE KILLS WORKER

Tilt-Up Death

Fifty-eight year old Christos Binos was killed on March 8 at a commercial site in Pakenham, Melbourne, when a 14-tonne tilt panel, which had already been erected, toppled and crushed him. Two other workers with Christos managed to scramble to safety.

The incident occurred at 10.50am on the large factory complex. The builder LJA Constructions had contracted the panel casting to R&M Mascitti, which in turn had subcontracted the erection of the panels to a crane and rigging company.

Christos had worked for Mascitti for eight years and was intending to retire in November, according to reports. He is survived by his wife, two daughters, a son and four grandchildren. He was known as a good bloke and hard worker, who will be sadly missed by his mates. WorkSafe Victoria is investigating the cause of the incident.

In its report (06:003), WorkSafe offers the following preliminary findings:

"The structural and shop drawings had recommendations for two dowel pins and weld connections from the panel base to the edge of the ground slab. However, the collapsed panel had neither the dowel pins nor the weld connections in place at the time of the collapse. Accordingly, the panel had no lateral restraint at the base.

"The internal walls appeared to have provision for base lateral restraint by seating the panels into recesses of appropriate depth."

WorkSafe warns that: "Wall panels with no lateral restraint at the base are unsafe, as they can be destabilised by lateral forces resulting from wind, impact etc.

"Adequate planning, giving consideration to the erection sequence, should ensure that panels are not stored in close proximity to erected panels and their brace supports.

"Incidents similar to this can be avoided if the advice given in the Victorian Industry Standard for Precast and Tilt-up Concrete for Buildings is fully implemented."

More info: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/construction.

12 month record broken

Just before Christos's tragic death, Victorian workers had shown we could have an industry without fatalities and serious injuries. More than 12 months has passed without a fatality on a Victorian construction site and the number of serious injuries had gone down. The safety unit has no doubt that this is due to the diligence of safety reps and organizers keeping safety at the forefront of everyone's minds.

"The combination of safety reps, training and diligence out in the field, on the jobs, is what has given us over 12 months without a fatality.

"But Christos's tragic death shows we have to constantly maintain that effort. Unions have achieved better safety standards in the construction industry and will continue to do so.