

INTERMODAL SAFETY BRIEFING

Avoiding Driver Injuries During Container Ship to Shore and RTG Crane Lift Operations

Truck drivers may be exposed to injuries from being thrown about the cab unexpectedly, or jostling. Jostling incidents occur when containers are lifted while they are still connected – either fully or partially, by the locking mechanism – to the container chassis, causing the semi-tractor/yard hostler to be lifted into the air along with the container.

Importance

If the crane operator doesn't catch the lift in time, a truck driver can be lifted as high as 30 feet in the air. If the container separates from the chassis before the crane operator has time to lower the container, the impact can cause severe injuries to the truck driver, any ground personnel in the vicinity and damage to the equipment involved.

Stakeholders

This safety briefing is designed to assist:

- Trucking Companies
- Longshoremen
- Intermodal Facilities
- Drivers

Ways to Prevent Lift Incidents

Before workers engage in lifting operations, employers should:

- Ensure that any employees who operate cranes are competent to do so – 29 CFR 1917.27(a). Competent crane operators should be trained to utilize their line of vision accurately, and understand signals and/or directions from workers on the ground to guide their lifts.
- Ensure that containers are inspected for defects before lifting them – 29 CFR 1917.71(g)(1). Pinmen should be trained to visually inspect container fittings for defects before a container is lifted to ensure that locking pins (“dogs”) will fully disengage and unlock.
- Ensure that containers are not hoisted unless all chassis twist locks are released – 29 CFR 1917.71(h). Workers should be trained to visually confirm that all chassis twist locks are released before lifting a container.

In addition, employers should train workers to:

- Maintain clear communication between the signalman and the crane operator during the lift.
- Effectively communicate all transitions to/from chassis and bomb-carts between signalmen and crane operators.
- Ensure that signalmen and semi-tractor/yard truck drivers understand the importance of the chassis being aligned correctly in the crane hook and that drivers pay particular attention to signals to ensure proper alignment.

Disclaimer: This Intermodal Safety Briefing is not exclusive and is offered for general guidance. It does not constitute industry standards or best practices.

