

Case Study – Traffic Management



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Introduction: Case studies can be a helpful way of understanding real world actions and consequences, and to learn from other's mistakes. Whilst we have drawn the below case from archived files, identifying details have been removed for brevity.

The Situation: Five separate PCBU's operated within a single large worksite; the land/property owner, the tenant, the facility management, the transport/logistics operator and a contractor (tradesman)

The Worksite: The worksite was a complex distribution facility, with a number of separate chilled storage units, where a number of transport/logistics operators unloaded and loaded chilled goods for distribution across New Zealand. The site had no Traffic Management Plan in place, in that all PCBU's were clear on any expectations and their own areas of responsibilities.

The Event: A tradesman was contracted to conduct maintenance onsite in a large, chilled storage room. He was working from a step ladder for a number of hours when a forklift operator entered the chiller room with his forklift, came into contact with the ladder and the tradesman was knocked to the floor sustaining serious head injuries.

Overlapping Duties: The HSWA is clear that where multiple PCBU's operate, they have an obligation to ensure they have consulted, coordinated & cooperated. Whilst all responsibilities aren't necessarily shared equally, PCBU's must have identified and consulted where identified responsibilities overlap.

The Owner: Has an ultimate responsibility for *the site* and cannot delegate out of its legal obligations. Where resources are required to ensure their site is fit for purpose, all PCBU's involved must be clear where those responsibilities lie. Areas of responsibilities would be focussed around site layout (one way systems/traffic management/isolation), site security, site signage. Also, a system to monitor & review critical risks onsite.

The Tenant: Is in the best position to control the risks *onsite* (in most cases). It must ensure that all other PCBU's are aware and comply with any H&S requirements. Including but not limited to, development of a Health & Safety Management System (HSMS) inc. the Traffic Management Plan, and the monitor and review of the safety performance of any operators.

The Facility Management: In this specific case, the FM must meet its duty in contracting and managing those contractors onsite, including induction and monitoring of works/maintenance, in accordance with the HSMS inc. TMP. Monitoring and reviewing the safety performance of those contractors onsite.

The Transport Operators: Responsible for complying with the HSMS inc. TMP. Responsible for drivers/operator training/competence, inductions, vehicle servicing/maintenance and

suitability. Any Safe Work Procedures (SWP) or Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). Including the monitoring and review of their own safety performance.

The Contractor: Responsible for following any site rules around health & safety inc. TMP ie. signing in, driving onsite, parking, including but not limited to; working from ladders, safe work areas, PPE requirements.

Note: At all levels - monitoring the contractors downstream and reporting to the PCBU upstream.

The Outcome:

The Owner: had commissioned an external site audit including Traffic Management Assessment. The TMA had largely been ignored, many of the recommendations were not either considered or introduced.

- ***The company owning the site was found to have breached their duties (HSAW 2015)***

The Tenant: were aware of the identified Risks and their obligations but had not discussed their concerns with either the property owner or the operators using the site. The tenant believed the FM company were managing the Risks on their behalf.

- ***The tenant operating the site was found to have breached their duties (HSAW 2015)***

The Facility Management: had introduced a JSA process for identifying and managing risk for contractors. The process was not monitored and reviewed and

- ***The FM managing the site was found to have breached their duties (HSAW 2015)***

The Transport Operators: understood the rules around operating forklifts around workers but continued to operate even though the tradesman was working outside the rules for working onsite. They had failed to ensure the tradesmen was provided with a safe place of work, in accordance to the HSMS.

- ***The operator using the site was found to have breached their duties (HSAW 2015)***

The Contractor: Were not aware of any site rules, had not been inducted in to any TMP, followed what they believed were safe e

- ***The company employing the contractor working on site was not found to have breached their duties (HSAW 2015).***

The Learnings:

1. Understand your obligations ie. where your responsibilities start and stop. This may change from site to site.
 - Rule of thumb: if you own the site, own the task or own the workers – you probably own the risk
2. Ensure you have consulted with both upstream and downstream PCBU's
3. Develop and introduce a Traffic Management Plan (TMP)
4. Ensure the TMP is shared across all PCBU's involved
 - The higher the risk, the higher the monitoring of compliance is required