



Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd

SAFETY ALERT

ARTC NSW No. 22



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USE OF RAIL TONGS

Recently, an employee received a nasty injury when the end of his finger was jammed, while using a set of large rail lifting tongs to remove some scrap rail off the back of a truck

The employee had been attempting to loosen the tongs prior to using them. The tongs had become jammed/locked together.

Instead of using a bar or hammer to release the jammed tongs, the employee used his hands

The tongs loosened and in the process “nipped” the end of his finger

The injury investigation also found that the tongs being used were too big for the job at hand, smaller tongs (lighter) would have sufficed. Smaller tongs were not on hand, however, they were on order

The employee lost time from work as a result of the injury



ACTION TO BE TAKEN

- Advise all employees under your control of this Safety Alert
- If lifting tongs become jammed or “locked up”, use a bar or hammer to loosen, **DO NOT USE YOUR HANDS TO SHAKE THE TONGS**
- Use the right sized lifting tongs for the job at hand
- Wear PPE (gloves) whenever using lifting equipment
- Ensure a “sign-off” (for example, a Team Safety Meeting record) is obtained to verify that employees have been briefed on this Safety Alert