



# QSET - Incident Alert

(Quality, Safety, Environment and Traffic Incident Alert)

Alert No: 0025

Date: 18/03/14

Please select one	Quality	Safety	Environment	Traffic
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## Photographs



**Without a pin, the quick hitch can unlock from the bucket**



**Quick hitch release button**





### Incident Details

An operator was levelling off ground on site when the quick hitch bucket came free from the excavator arm falling approximately 2 metres to the ground. The operator was busy slewing at the time.

The area was managed as an exclusion area as loading is taking place and as such no personnel were in the zone or slew radius of the excavator.

On investigation it was found that safety pins and r-clip as well as the wedge anchor had been removed days before the incident. (See photos above)

The quick-hitch release button is located behind the operators right elbow and when depressed will release the bucket (Approximately 5 seconds to fully release) (See Photo above)

Corrective action was to insert the pin and r-clip as well as the wedge which are safety design features of the equipment.

### Casual Factors

Primary Causes:

- Failure to install safety pin, R-clip and wedge as per operating requirements for the quick hitch system

Secondary Cause:

- Pre-start checklist has no hold point when critical safety issues are identified
- No stand-down requirement on plant and equipment for critical issues
- Operator felt recording a deviation on the pre-start was enough and verbal communication was not necessary.
- Organisational reliance that the operator will stand-down when there is a fault and verbally communicate
- No method exists to check that safety devices are available and fitted

### Lessons Learnt

- Plant operators are to notify the supervisor verbally when completing a daily pre-start of any safety defects and record this on the inspection.
- Operators to be better briefed on all the safety features and requirements of the equipment they operate.
- Supervisors / Superintendents to verify operator competency prior to commencing work on any machine on site.
- Record of daily pre-starts to be reviewed by a supervisor daily and coordinate any maintenance required.
- Never operate equipment with missing safety features, immediately stand the equipment down.
- Daily pre-start checks should include hold points for each type of equipment where a mandatory stand-down of the equipment will occur when related to a critical safety feature of the equipment.
- Pre-inspection of equipment when delivered to site to be checked for compliance.