

# URS Safety Alert

Alert SYD281009 28<sup>th</sup> October 2009

## VEHICLE CRASHED INTO WORKZONE

### Why has this safety alert been issued ?

URS was conducting groundwater sampling of monitoring wells within a busy roadway median strip. In order to address the potential hazard of traffic: 1) the work was conducted on a Saturday; 2) the speed was reduced from 70km/hr to 60km/hr; and 3) the two inner lanes of traffic were closed down by authorized traffic control contractors in the area adjacent to the work.

Prior to the sampling commencing, a van drove through the witches hats on one of the closed lanes, hit a large trailer-mounted electronic sign and crashed into the back of the traffic controller's parked truck. The front of the van was crushed by the impact and the driver was pinned inside the vehicle. None of the road crew were in the truck at the time of impact. The URS field team and traffic controllers were unharmed. The large trailer-mounted electronic sign was thrown a distance (>10m) following the impact and landed approximately 5 metres from the work crew.

The URS site supervisor reported the accident to 000, whilst the traffic control contractors attended to the injured man and directed traffic around the incident. The driver and his dog were extracted from the vehicle by police rescue and ambulance paramedics. The driver was injured but conscious when taken into the ambulance.



The impacted vehicle



The electronic sign thrown by the impact

### Lessons Learned

An onsite investigation into the incident was carried out by the attending police and WorkCover NSW. It was concluded that 1) the worksite had been appropriately setup in accordance with the RTA permit, 2) all procedures and control measures were place, and 3) the incident was attributed to the actions of the van driver.

#### The lessons learned from this incident are:

- The importance of the work crew following health and safety procedures and implementing hazard control measures.
- The importance of the work crew remaining vigilant and aware of their surroundings, even when hazard control measures are in place.
- The necessity of the work crew being correctly trained and prepared to respond in an emergency situation.
- The importance of having all health and safety documentation organized, up-to-date, and readily available at the work site.
- The importance of using subcontractors that have had their health and safety systems assessed and approved.

### Before Starting A Task, Ask



#### Identify hazards before they become Incidents

- What am I about to do?
- What could go wrong?
- What could be done to make it safer?
- What have I done to communicate the hazards?

**URS**

If you have a Safety "Lesson Learned", good ideas, or other safety information of general interest to environmental consultants, drillers, tank removal contractors, etc, please contact John Petersen (Regional H&S Manager) at URS Australia Pty Ltd, Melbourne on (03) 8699 7631 or [john\\_petersen@urscorp.com](mailto:john_petersen@urscorp.com). Information will be circulated without naming names or places (unless you specifically want us to).