

Incident Summary



December 2016

Overview of Company

Coles Supermarkets is a national supermarket retailer operating 787 supermarkets employing more than 83,000 team members. Coles has 57 supermarkets and employs over 5800 team members in South Australia.

The Incident

On 15 October 2013, two Coles team members were working as night fillers at the Coles Oaklands Park store. While moving stock from the storeroom onto the shop floor, the team members loaded a roll cage to a height of higher than 1400mm above the ground. They then pushed the roll cage through the store without a team member acting as a 'spotter' to avoid the risk of collision. While pushing the roll cage through the store, a team member collided with a customer. As a result the customer sustained a fractured pelvis, fractured elbow and a bump on the head.

Probable Causes

One challenge in working across a large multisite organisation is to ensure that we continually re-enforce safe behaviour and ensure that all team members operate within safe work practices.

Probable cause of the incident includes:

- The team member's vision was restricted when moving the roll cage due to the height to which the stock was loaded, and a spotter was not used to assist in the safe movement of the roll cage;
- The store had failed to adequately implement and maintain processes for the safe use of roll cages.

Corrective Actions

1. A New Health, Safety and Wellbeing strategy was introduced across the entire Coles network, to refocus our team on caring for themselves, their team, and our customers. As part of this new approach, we have appointed store-focused People & Product Safety Managers to each of our state leadership teams, to support the business in implementing and promoting safety culture and performance.
2. Introduction of the Backstock Pick Tool, an electronic stockroom management tool, and training for store team members through the Grocery Core Program. These resources are used to improve efficiency in moving stock from the store room to the shop floor and decrease stock handling, which in turn will decrease the number of roll cages on the shop floor.
3. Rollout of the safe roll cage use training program to all grocery team members. This program focuses on how to safely move roll cages and how we reinforce and recognise safe behaviour. The training included video, team talks, a photo poster and ongoing reinforcement to ensure this behaviour becomes a habit.
4. Annual Refresher training of Safe Work Practices is conducted through an online assessment and competency-based check. The online assessment is based on various scenarios that team members face in order to assess their competence and understanding of key safety requirements. Roll cage safety will always be incorporated into this refresher training.