TRANSPOWER

SAFETY ALERT!



21 August 2026

Forklift tipped forward while lifting a CB disruptor head

WHAT HAPPENED?

A 2.5-ton forklift fitted with an extendable fork attachment was being used to load a Circuit Breaker (CB) disruptor head onto its transport crate positioned on the rear of a flat-deck truck.

While lifting the load to an approximate height of 2 metres, the forklift became unstable and began to tip forward, causing the rear wheels to lift off the ground. As a result, the CB disruptor head descended, with one end striking the truck deck and causing damage to several insulator skirts. The load was safely lowered back to the ground using Hiab in conjunction with the forklift.

During the investigation, it was identified that a worker assisting with the lift placed their hand on the rear of the forklift as it tipped forward with the intention to counterbalance the load.



Note: This photo is for Illustration only. Not the photo of the incident.

Nobody was injured in this incident however there was a potential for serious injury.

ACTIONS TAKEN

- Work was stopped; the load was repositioned and moved to the workshop for assessment.
- Schedule the repair of the insulator skirt.

ROOT CAUSE

- The load rating with the jib attached had not been identified correctly for that size of forklift.
- The team did not consider an alternative lift arrangement (i.e. the CB disruptor head loaded into the transport crate at floor level then load the crate onto the back of the truck).
- The jib is normally used on another forklift which has a larger payload capacity than what was hired for this work.

LEARNINGS

- Use the correct equipment for the task. The forklift size was selected as the load would be under 1000Kgs; at the time of selection the team did not consider the change in performance of the forklift when the jib was attached. The jib load rating was well displayed on the unit.
- The jib was used to allow the circuit breaker interrupter head to be turned while being located through the doorway into the workshop' this manoeuvring in the workshop also influenced the forklift sizing, not the total weight of the setup.
- There was no correlation regarding the forklift load chart with the jib attachment.
- NZQA have an additional qualification 10852 for the use of forklifts using a jib or extended forks. When assessing operator training requirements, this additional qualification must be considered also.
- To better manage the safe working zone of forklifts, Ventia is fitting halo safety systems to their new and existing fleet, providing a visual safety zone to warn other personnel to stay clear around the mobile plant.

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Incident Date	26/01/2026