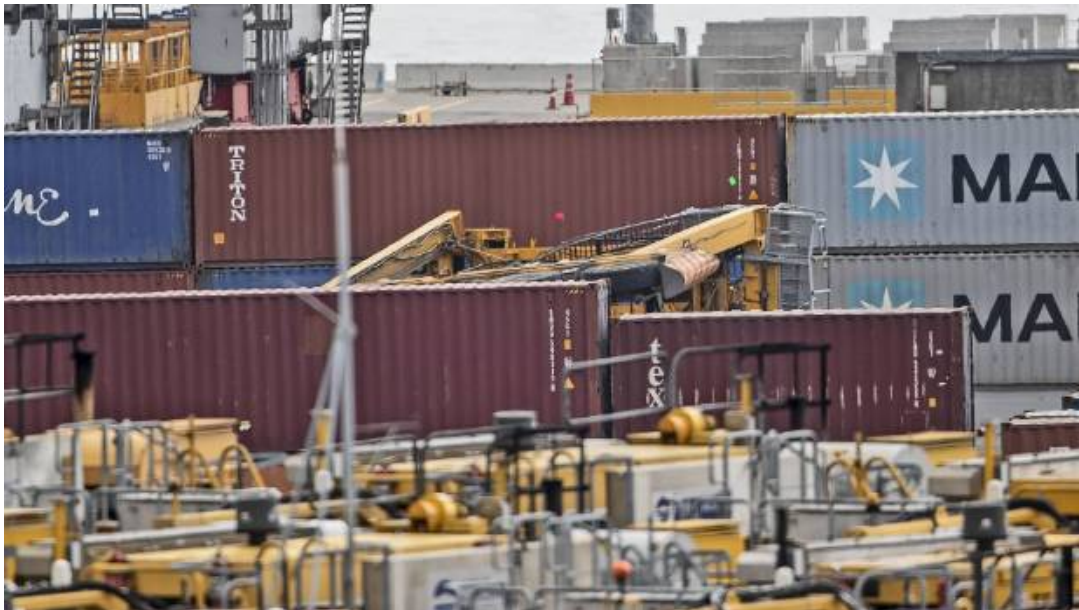


Ports of Auckland worker critically injured after a straddle carrier tipped

Danielle Clent and Anuja Nadkarni 11:46, Aug 27 2018



A man is in a critical condition after a straddle carrier he was operating overturned at Ports of Auckland.

Ports of Auckland (POAL) acting chief executive Wayne Thompson said the cause of the incident was not yet known and a full investigation was under way.

"Our primary concern is for the welfare of our colleague and we are doing everything we can to look after him and his whanau, friends and colleagues," Thompson said.

The container terminal will remain closed until at least 7am tomorrow, POAL spokesman Matt Ball said.

Straddle carriers are the machines which haul shipping containers around on the wharves.

Fire and Emergency shift manager Scott Osmond said they were called to the scene at about 3.50am on Monday.

Osmond said the straddle carrier had turned onto its side and crews, including a heavy rescue tender, got the man out.

The man was taken to Auckland City Hospital, Osmond said. St John said three vehicles attended the scene at 3.46am to treat one person in a critical condition.

A police spokesperson said police responded to reports of a straddle truck tipping with the driver in it at 3.50am.

"The man was extracted from the vehicle and transported to Auckland Hospital via ambulance," the spokesperson said.

A Worksafe NZ spokeswoman said an investigation had been opened into the incident.

The country's largest port processed over 580,000 containers last year and an average of about 35 containers every hour.

In 2016, POAL announced plans to introduce automated straddle carriers by 2019.

By the middle of next year the port will have 27 automated straddle carriers and reduce its manual straddle fleet from 40 to 21.

It received two automated straddle carriers earlier this year.

Manually-driven straddle carriers will continue to be used between the yard and ship-to-shore cranes.

Ports of Auckland is New Zealand's largest container port and is owned by Auckland Council.

Infometrics economist Brad Olsen said with The Port of Tauranga being nearby will likely be able to take up any slack in the next few days.

"If there are goods and containers that urgently need to be offloaded, and getting them from Tauranga to Auckland wouldn't be too much hassle."