



Mechanical failure of rock truck results in fatal runaway

A young worker was operating an articulating rock truck (ART) that was hauling rock from a blast site. While the truck was travelling down a newly constructed steep logging road (23 percent), the brakes failed. To slow the truck down, the operator drove it into a ditch. The ART tipped onto its box and slid down the ditch line until the cab struck a large rock outcrop. The driver was ejected and was struck by a large rock that was thrown from the truck's load. He received fatal injuries.

The investigation found that a rear-axle torque rod had broken away from the housing at an improperly welded repair. Excessive movement of the box may have cut the rear brake line and air line. The front brakes and the partial use of the centre-axle brakes were not able to stop the truck as it gained speed on the steep hill.

Safe work practices:

- Train drivers on the safe operation of ARTs on logging roads and on steep grades.
- Replace defective integral parts, such as torque rods connected to the running gear, rather than making temporary repairs.
- Use a qualified person to perform welding repairs to the appropriate standard.
- Repair and maintain equipment in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and any standards the equipment is required to meet.
- Ensure the required seat belts are provided and are worn by operators.

