



# SAFETY CONCERNS WITH HEAVY VEHICLE ACCIDENT REPAIRS

# Heavy Vehicles on our Roads

- ❑ Heavy vehicles are an integral part of our economy.
- ❑ Sometimes carrying up to 90 tonnes on our roads, it is vital that all safety components are inspected and checked after any accident repairs have been performed.
- ❑ In cases where these items have not been carried out, it can become catastrophic.



# Vehicle Rollover on 18/11/2008

VEHICLE WAS DEEMED A TOTAL LOSS BY INSURANCE COMPANY

VEHICLE WAS SOLD AT AUCTION TO AN UNLICENSED, INEXPERIENCED "BACK YARD" REPAIRER

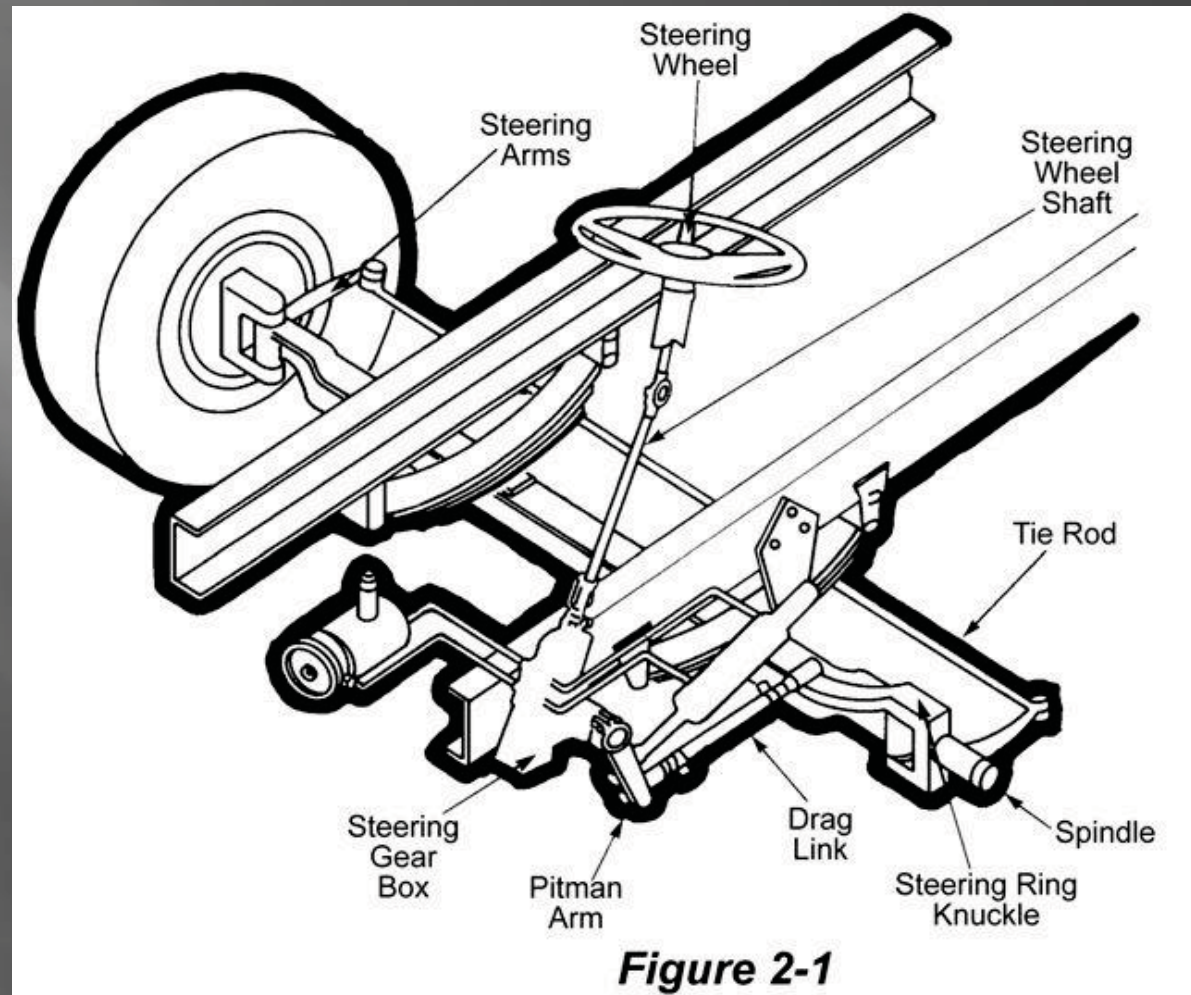


This vehicle is now back driving on our roads after a “backyard” repair!



## Steering Components Configuration and Explanation

- Steering wheel turns shaft in the sealed unit steering box
- Steering box moves pitman arm in turn moving drag link assembly
- Drag link moves steering knuckle and stub axle.
- Stub axle retains wheel to the vehicle via king pin.



# Experienced, licensed repairers know what SAFETY issues to look for.



- Volvo prime mover involved in minor accident. There was no impact or visible damage to steering box.
- The impact point on this vehicle was the right hand wheel.
- Due to inertia forces, the impact travels from the wheel to the drag link assembly.

## Removal of steering box shows no sign of damage.

- Even when the steering box was removed, no visible damage was evident

- As these steering and suspension components are sealed, it is impossible to check if they are in a serviceable condition unless a full strip down occurs.

- Inertia forces then travel from the drag link into the steering box.





# Steering box shaft found to be cracked and unserviceable!

•NOTE MAJOR CRACKS IN STEERING SECTOR SHAFT

•EVEN CRACK TESTING PICKS UP CRACKS THAT ARE NOT EVIDENT PREVIOUSLY



Steering sector shaft failed on previous slide.  
Investigation of this accident concluded failed steering sector shaft!



# Repairing trucks through cost savings without regard to SAFETY

- Owners and back yard repairers are purchasing these vehicles from auction yards and are putting them back on our roads.
- They do not have the knowledge or expertise of licensed, experienced heavy vehicle repairers and do not know what to look for.
- In the pursuit of cost savings, these same owners and “back yarders” over look these safety items to minimise repair costs.
- Repairs are being authorised by some insurance loss assessors to workshops which do not comply with OH&S, WorkCover and environmental standards (and are unskilled in the repair of heavy vehicles). There are many cases of vehicles being painted in uncontrolled and environmentally damaging conditions – for example, painting in the open air or inappropriate preparation areas also exposing workers to serious health damaging chemicals.

# Steering Pitman Arm cracked in half!

•IMPACT DAMAGE IS ON THE LEFT HAND SIDE OF THE CABIN

•STEERING BOX AND PITMAN ARM IS LOCATED ON THE RIGHT HAND!



# More safety items to inspect: Turntables



# Turntable base plate bent and jaw kit cracked!

•TOP DECK OF THE TURNTABLE  
PULLED UP BY TRAILER



•JAW LOCK PIN HOLDING TRAILER  
TO TRUCK CRACKED IN HALF!



# Specialist trained technicians required!



# Highly Trained Professionals

- CRACK TESTING OF KING PINS
- X-RAY OF AXLE
- LATHE TESTING

- TECHNICIANS ARE TRAINED IN ALL ASPECTS OF HEAVY VEHICLE SAFETY.
- NO EXTERNAL DAMAGES EVIDENT BUT KING PIN WAS FOUND TO BE CRACKED!





# Damage is not always evident.

•SOMETIMES, EVEN IN SEVERE ROLLOVER CASES, THERE DOESN'T APPEAR TO BE MUCH DAMAGE.

•THIS VEHICLE WAS WRITTEN OFF FROM THE INSURANCE COMPANY AND SOLD BACK TO THE AUCTION YARD.



# Questions to be asked!

- This vehicle was then purchased back from the auction yard and repaired by an unknown, unlicensed repairer!
- Does the “back yard” repairer know what to look for?
- Do they have the equipment and expertise to undertake the repair?
- Have they looked at the internal steering components, chassis and suspension, turntable etc?
- Or have they only performed the cosmetic panel damage that is visible in order to get the vehicle back on our roads and ready to sell to the next unsuspecting buyer?
- Unskilled and non-qualified repairers working in uncontrolled conditions do not know what to look for or how to conduct an inspection process therefore displaying little or no respect for the environment or the safety of those around them.
- Inexperienced repairers and backyard unlicensed repairers must be stopped from performing dangerous and unlawful practices and **MUST** be bound by the full force of the law.



## Major safety concerns require major change!

- Today's vehicles carry more technology than ever before
- Computer downloading of engine management, composite materials used in construction and advancements in safety systems all require specialist training techniques.
- Heavy vehicle smash repair establishments investing tens of millions of dollars in equipment in order to correctly and safely reinstate vehicles to pre-accident condition



STOP unlicensed, inexperienced  
“backyarders” repairing these vehicles



# Following the Code of Conduct

- All licensed repairers and members of the Australian Heavy Vehicle Repairers Association are signatories to the Repairers Code of Conduct and adhere to its guidelines
- The majority of Insurance Companies are signatories to the Repairers Code of Conduct and adhere to its guidelines.
- If a total loss truck is purchased at an auction yard by a “back yard” inexperienced repairer, they do not have any restrictions on whether to follow the code or not!

# “Our Solution”

- All heavy vehicles involved in major accidents that are deemed a total loss should NOT be allowed to be repaired and re-registered back on our roads.
- A register of total loss vehicles to be kept with the appropriate authorities.
- Licensing of ALL heavy vehicle repairers to enable the safety of heavy vehicles after accident damage has been performed.
- Any repairer who undertakes repairs to heavy vehicles meet the minimum equipment levels and standards as set by the Australian Heavy Vehicle Repairers Association

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Thank you.

