

The Otago Daily Times.

Union Renews Call for Port Safety Inquiry

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A Port Otago worker has been seriously injured on the job, prompting the Maritime Union to again call for an industry-wide health and safety inquiry. St John and police were called to the Port Chalmers site after a straddle car crashed about 1.15pm on Wednesday.

The 26-year-old from Carey's Bay was taken to Dunedin Hospital by St John ambulance. A spokesman for the hospital said the man was in intensive care in a serious condition.



Emergency services were called to Port Otago early this afternoon. Photo: ODT

It is understood the vehicle, which picks and carries containers while straddling the load, toppled over and the pilot suffered crush injuries. Port Otago chief executive Geoff Plunket said most staff were taken off shift in the afternoon.

"We've shut the operation down as much as we can."

Mr Plunket would not comment on what caused the crash.

"The interest of our staff members is our priority at the moment," he said.

"We're quite distressed by the accident."

A WorkSafe New Zealand spokeswoman said the regulator is investigating and an inspector had visited the port.

The Maritime Union of New Zealand confirmed that one of its members had been hurt.