

# NAFLIC

*National Association For Leisure Industry Certification*

## Standards & Related Documents Committee

### TECHNICAL BULLETIN - SEPTEMBER 1999

#### 193. Gondola Wheel Accidents

The Committee wish to draw attention to the importance of ensuring that doors or chain closures on Gondola Wheel rides are properly secured prior to commencement of the ride. At our September meeting we discussed three examples of car / gondola overturning where this had not been done.

In the first, a spinning gondola type, the chain which fastens across the entrance opening was, for unknown reason, left dangling. This chain then became entangled with the drive rope such that gravity no longer kept the gondola vertical - indeed it was inverted and some passengers were ejected from a height of about 12 metres.

In the second example, the door of a non-spinning gondola was not locked. As a result, the open door snagged a, non-structural, lighting member and was, again, inverted.

The third example occurred on 12 August 1999 in Texas and involved a "Kiddie Ferris Wheel", a 49-year-old ride. On this occasion one of the ride's cars flipped upside-down, injuring four children. Officials say that the door of the children's compartment was not properly secured, and that the accident happened when the door opened and caught on one of the ride's railings. The car flipped twice, causing the children to be thrown around inside their compartment.

In conclusion, these three examples seem to indicate that, even though the closure of doors / chains may not be essential to the safe containment of passengers, these components may, if they can reach or become entangled with other parts, constitute a significant risk of passenger ejection. In such circumstances, when dimensional re-design to remove contact / entanglement is not done, the risk may need to be contained by positive locking confirmed by attendants trained to understand the consequences described above.

Committee Members :- Dr Garry Fawcett (Chairman), Mr Richard Barnes, Mr Bob Nicholls, Mr Robert Casey, Mr Peter Smith, Mr Richard Cousins, Mr Ian Grant and representatives of Plant Safety Ltd

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