NAFLIC

National Association For Leisure Industry Certification

Standards & Related Documents Committee

TECHNICAL BULLETIN - SEPTEMBER 2005

308. Fabbri Space Loop Accident

An accident on 1 July 2005 resulted in the death of a 9 year old boy at a fair in Highland, Indiana, USA, after he fell from a height said to about 25 feet. The ride involved, called "Wind Shear", was of the Space Loop type manufactured by the Fabbri Group.

Reports say that the child was 5 ft 1 in (1550 mm) tall, so he would certainly have met the ride's height requirement. However, it is reported that the boy got onto the ride after the operator had applied the automatic restraint locks. All the other passengers would therefore have been properly locked in to their over-shoulder restraints. It is possible, then, that the ride started up while the boy was trying, and failing, to open and close the restraint on himself.

Officials investigating the accident say that the ride, presumably including the restraint locking, was mechanically sound.

We note that, since the 32 seat gondola loads from both sides in two back-to-back rows of 16 (there is also a 40 seat version), these rides often have entrances and / or exits at both front and rear. In such circumstances, the operator's position may be inter-related to the manning and / or barrier / gate requirements for the device. Some issues that may arise are :-

- Does the operator have an unobstructed view of, or other means of monitoring, all areas, including all entrances / exits and each seat?
- Has a "safety envelope" been defined, from which persons are to be excluded during operation?
- Are there any gates which close off access before the ride begins?
- If not, is there an adequate arrangement of barriers, platforms, steps, marked danger zones, notices or announcements to make inadvertent entry to danger areas less likely?
- Is there a need for attendants to man the entrances / exits during the ride cycle?
- What training should the operator and attendants be given?
- Is there an adequate system for checking that all passengers are safely contained before the ride cycle starts?

Safety of Amusement Devices: Design (NAFLIC; ISBN 0 9546161 0 3), particularly Chapters 7 and 10, and Section F of *Fairgrounds and Amusement Parks - Guidance on Safe Practice* (HSG 175; HSE Books; ISBN 0 7176 1174 4) give advice on these matters.

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