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Historic Cobb & Co coach smashed to pieces and 14 people injured after spooked horses pull carriage off bridge in Queensland bush

By Australian Associated Press and Sarah Dean

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A toddler and four other children are among more than a dozen injured after horses pulling the coach in which they were travelling ran off a bridge and plunged three metres.

The horses bolted off a causeway bridge and dived into a dry creek bed on the outskirts of Longreach in central west Queensland, smashing the wooden coach.

Police say something must have spooked the animals as they took people on a ride on Monday morning.

Some of the 14 people injured have broken bones after the incident which police described as 'quite a substantial fall' and four of them remain in hospital.

Inspector Mark Henderson says all 12 passengers and the two drivers were injured.

Five children aged two, six, nine, 11 and 14 are among the injured, an ambulance spokesperson told AAP.

A nine-year-old girl suffered abdominal injuries, a 58-year-old man suffered lower back pain and two other adults are being treated for chest pain.

One of the drivers was the tour company's owner and the other was his cousin, both have suffered fractures but 'will be fine' a spokesperson for Kinnon & Co told MailOnline.

Brenda Daley, who helps run the historic stagecoach tours that offer the chance to 'gallop along an outback dirt track in a fully-laden Cobb and Co Stage Coach', said an accident like this has never happened before.

'It's certainly not a good scene,' Inspector Henderson told the [ABC](#).

'Unfortunately it is one of those accidents where animals have a mind of their own and they just can't be controlled.

'The stagecoach has been running in this town for many, many, many years and I'm certainly not aware of any accident of this severity.'

The four horses were not hurt but the incident has been described as a 'very tragic situation' for the community.

Ms Daley said the purpose built replica coach was bought two years ago and that the company is 'very very disappointed'.

'I'd like to stress that the emergency services and Longreach hospital staff and the vet have just been amazing.

'We are very grateful about the way they've handled everything,' she said.

One lane of Jundah Road remains closed after the accident, with motorists advised to seek an alternate route.

The Forensic Crash Unit is investigating.

The Kinnon & Co website says on their tours customers can: 'Retrace the steps of Cobb & Co. by travelling on the original mail route between Longreach and Windorah enjoying the unique history of Cobb & Co and Longreach.'

Cobb & Co is the name of a transportation company in Australia that was prominent in the late 19th century when it operated stagecoaches to many areas in the outback.

Cobb & Co in Queensland was founded in 1865, the first coach ran from Brisbane to Ipswich.

In 1881, the firm ran some 3000 horses a total of around 10,000 miles a week, making it the largest transport company in Queensland.