

SAFETY ALERT



SERIOUS INJURY WHILE ROOF BOLTING

INCIDENT

An operator suffered a fractured forearm and dislocated elbow while roof bolting on a continuous miner.

CIRCUMSTANCES

While cleaning a blocked drill bit, the operator put the chuck end of the drill steel across the front of the bolting shield of the continuous miner towards the coal face.

A fall of roof in front of the supports being erected hit the chuck end of the drill steel. This forced the drill bit end of the drill steel upwards, hitting the operator on the forearm and elbow.

INVESTIGATION

An accident is the result of an uncontrolled release of energy.

By placing part of the drill steel under unsupported roof this allowed the transfer of the energy back into the otherwise safe working environment.

Both the position of people and equipment when working near unsupported roof can be critical in avoiding accidents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Mine sites to assess the potential for energy transfer (resulting from a fall of ground striking plant or equipment into the work environment) in the design of their safe working systems to manage strata control risks, Coal Mines (General) Regulation Clause 6.
- Mine sites to review their existing Job Safety Analyses (JSAs) or to conduct JSAs relating to roof support practices with particular regard to the positioning of people, equipment and materials and their exposure to impact by falling ground, either directly or indirectly. This would be done to achieve the provision of safe, effective and systematic work methods for roadway support, Coal Mines (Underground) Regulation Clause 48(e).
- In the training of employees in roadway support practices, potential injury mechanisms and site/task risk assessment principles be included in the support system, Coal Mines (Underground) Regulation Clause 48(h).

For further information contact David Carey, Inspector of Coal Mines, Lithgow, on (02) 6351 3052.

APPROVED

R Regan
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SAFETY OPERATIONS