



DEPARTMENT OF MINERALS AND ENERGY
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT REPORT NO. 73

CONVEYOR BELT FAILURE

INCIDENT

A conveyor belt broke on an inclined conveyor carrying ore from the crusher to a stockpile.

Eight employees after placing their danger tags on the drive motor isolator had been instructed to get on the belt to remove ore to facilitate repairs to the conveyor belt. As the ore was removed the lightened belt ran backwards and started to feed through between two idlers and down onto the ground eleven metres below. One man was injured when he got off the moving conveyor and another sustained multiple injuries when he was carried by the belt down between the idlers and fell 10 metres to the ground.

CAUSES

Both ends of the belt were laid on the ground either side of the drive pulleys leaving the belt unsecured. No attempt was made to secure the belt even though belt clamps had been brought to site. No job safety analysis had been carried out and no safe working procedure was in place. Supervision did not ensure that all precautions had been taken before sending the employees onto the belt to remove ore. Several of the employees were operators who had little experience of working on conveyors.

PREVENTATIVE ACTION

Supervision should ensure all reasonable precautions have been taken to provide a safe workplace. A job safety analysis should have highlighted the fact that the belt was not secure and developed a safe working procedure to eliminate this. Management should clearly define the role and responsibility of each supervisor so that each workplace is under the control and supervision of **one person**.

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SAFETY AWARENESS SAVES LIVES