



S A F E T Y B U L L E T I N

SURFACE DRILL RIGS - PROTECTION FROM ROTATING PARTS

A fatality which occurred on an exploration drill rig at an open cut mine during June 1995 was the subject of a Coronial inquest. A driller employed by an exploration drilling contractor was operating a track-mounted diamond drill rig when he became entangled with the rotating drill rod. He was found jammed between the rod and the mast of the rig and had suffered massive head and internal injuries from which he later died.

The jury found that death arose by way of accident, but evidence led at the inquest prompted the Coroner to issue the following rider, which was recommended by the jury:

We recommend that the drilling industry pursues development of a suitable guard for rotating drill rods.

Manufacturers, suppliers, employers, mine managers, exploration managers and workers in the production mining and exploration industries are urged to give consideration to the development of both guards for rotating parts (including drill rods) on drilling rigs of all kinds and of systems of work which remove drill operators from areas near the rig where they may become caught by such rotating parts.

Attention is drawn to the duty of care of employers (s.9) employees (s.10) principal employers and managers, including exploration managers (s.13) and manufacturers and suppliers (s.14) under the Mines Safety and Inspection Act 1994.

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