



DEPARTMENT OF MINES
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT REPORT NO. 17

CAUGHT BY ROCK DRILL

INCIDENT

The overalls of a jumbo drill operator were caught by a rotating drill steel. The clothing twisted up so tightly that he became trapped hard against the boom. The man was working alone and he had to wait until another worker visited the workplace before being released.

He sustained serious bruising and burns to the pelvic area.

The operator had drilled a lifter in the face, and retracted the machine but left the drill rod rotating. He then went forward to the face to insert a sleeve in the collar of the previously drilled hole and his clothing became caught.

CAUSE

Inappropriate work practice when working adjacent to rotating machinery. At the very least the machine should have been shut down.

RECOMMENDATION

Clarify work procedures for jumbo drill operations so that operators understand the hazards when working near rotating machinery. Loose fitting clothing greatly increases the risk.

When a jumbo is being operated at a mining face, no person should be at or near the face with the drill operating. If work has to be done at the face the drill must be shut down.

Ensure that training of supervisors and operators highlights the precautions required.

CAUTION

FATAL ACCIDENTS HAVE RESULTED FROM THIS TYPE OF HAZARD, COMMONLY BY STRANGULATION.

J M Torlach
STATE MINING ENGINEER

February 1991

SAFETY AWARENESS SAVES LIVES