



**DEPARTMENT OF MINERALS AND ENERGY  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

**SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT REPORT NO. 42**

**REMOTELY OPERATED MACHINERY – FATAL ACCIDENT**

**INCIDENT**

A miner died from injuries sustained when crushed between the slew conveyor of a remotely operated coal cutting machine and the side wall of a heading.

The accident occurred while the machine was tramming in reverse under remote control operation. The deceased was in the process of releasing the machine's trailing cable from overhead support pulleys. He was crushed when the machine suddenly slewed from the intended direction of travel.

**CAUSE**

Investigations as to what caused the machine to slew in an uncontrolled manner are still being investigated. However, it is apparent that the deceased was working in close proximity to the rear of the machine at the time.

**COMMENTS AND PREVENTATIVE ACTION**

Accidents of this type can be prevented by rigidly adhering to a system of work which positively identifies danger zones around machinery and safe operating positions for all persons in the vicinity.

In general, it is considered vital that work methods be determined from a detailed assessment of all safety risks involved, and take into account the very real possibility of unplanned machine movement which may arise from component failure, ground conditions, or operator error.

Comprehensive guidelines relating to the design of remotely operated mining equipment are currently being developed by Standards Australia and are expected to be finalised by mid-1994.

G Dodge  
ACTING STATE MINING ENGINEER

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**SAFETY AWARENESS SAVES LIVES**