



**DEPARTMENT OF MINERALS AND ENERGY
WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT REPORT NO. 36

INJURIES SUSTAINED WHILST WORKING ON DRILLING MAST

INCIDENTS

During 1991 two persons received serious injuries in separate accidents, in each case while working up the mast of a drilling rig.

In one accident the injured person lost three toes and in the other, the injuries consisted of severe lacerations to a foot.

In 1992 a drill rig offsider lost his arm when his jacket was caught by the rotating drill rods and he was dragged between the rods and the mast. This man had climbed up the mast to carry out maintenance work while the drill was operating.

COMMENTS

All three accidents occurred as a result of the injured persons being up the mast while the drills were operating. Each had the potential to result in fatal injuries.

PREVENTATIVE ACTION

Persons working on drilling rigs need to be made aware of the following:

- Under no circumstances should any person be on the mast of a drilling rig while the drill is operating.
- Before climbing the mast or commencing any maintenance or service work on a drilling rig, the power source must be isolated and the isolating switch tagged out with a suitable prominent danger tag, and the isolation proven.
- When a person on a drilling rig mast finds it necessary to move the drilling head or rotate the drill stem, he should vacate the mast before removing danger tags from the control switch.
- Whenever a person is working up the mast, a securely anchored safety belt or harness must be worn.
- Effective communications must be maintained between the driller and any person working up the mast of a drilling rig.

Note: A person on a properly designed and constructed working platform fitted to the mast may be considered as having vacated the mast for the purpose of permitting movement or rotation of the head. Persons on such a platform must wear a securely anchored safety belt and lanyard.

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27th April 1993

SAFETY AWARENESS SAVES LIVES