



# Mines Safety

## Significant Incident Report No. 137

### Emergency response team members struck by falling oxygen cylinder

#### Incident

Recently, two emergency response team members were struck by an oxygen cylinder while participating in a closed-circuit breathing apparatus course. The accident occurred during a search and rescue exercise involving descending an emergency escape ladderway.

Two team members were climbing down from the surface to an underground fresh air base. The team members above started to lower the stretcher loaded with standard search and rescue equipment down the emergency escape ladderway before the two team members were clear of the ladder. A spare breathing apparatus oxygen cylinder dislodged from the stretcher and fell down the escapeway, striking one team member on the arm and the other on the shoulder, resulting in bruising. The outcome of this incident could have been more serious.

#### Causes

- Lowering a poorly secured load.
- Emergency response team members descended below a suspended load.
- Team trainer not following standard protocols for descending ladderways.

#### Recommendations

- Emergency response captains and trainers (and others) must ensure all items being lowered or raised in a ladderway are adequately restrained and controlled.
- Similarly, employees must not travel or be located in an exposed position below a suspended load.
- Managers should ensure mine rescue teams have standard operating procedures developed for regular activities.
- Managers should ensure emergency response team members are trained in those operating procedures.
- Prior to all practical emergency response training sessions, a job safety analysis (JSA) or job hazard analysis (JHA) should be completed and appropriately signed off.
- Emergency response training sessions should be conducted under the supervision of a competent person who has significant experience and expertise in the discipline in which the emergency response team is being trained.

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