



Significant Incident Report No. 243

Subject: Drill fitter crushed between drill head and rod centraliser arm - fatal accident

Date: 14 July 2016

Summary of incident

Note: The Department of Mines and Petroleum's investigation is ongoing. The information contained in this significant incident report is based on materials received, knowledge and understanding at the time of writing.

On the evening of 19 June 2016, a drill fitter working on a blast-hole drill rig died after being crushed between the drill rod centraliser arm and drill head.

Two fitters were re-installing a head-slide wear pad for a drill head, which had fallen out during operation. The rig was being used under power to align and fit two head-slide bolts into the bolt holes.

The fitter was accessing the drill head when the centraliser arm closed unexpectedly while he was standing on the hydraulically operated break-out tool (HOBO). He sustained fatal crush injuries to the chest and upper abdomen when caught between the drill rod centraliser arm and the drill head.



Blast-hole drill rig. Left. Front view showing position of HOBO, drill head, centraliser arm and drill cab. Right. Top view showing potential crush zone between the drill rod centraliser arm and drill head.

Direct causes

- The drill rod centraliser arm moved unexpectedly.
- The fitter was standing on the HOBO in a potential crush zone.

Contributory causes

- An effective isolation had not been carried out prior to conducting the work.
- The uncontrolled movement of the rod centraliser arm had been identified on pre-start forms in the past but had not been actioned in the maintenance system.
- No task-based risk assessment (e.g. JHA) was performed for the task.

Actions required

The following actions are recommended to reduce the potential for injury while maintaining mobile plant.

- Implement and enforce suitable isolation procedures.
- Confirm that workers conducting maintenance are adequately instructed, trained, assessed and supervised.
- Complete suitable task-based risk assessments, and assess and authorise prior to conducting work.
- Rectify defects or faults identified during equipment pre-start inspections within a suitable timeframe.

Further information

- Department of Mines and Petroleum, Guidelines, www.dmp.wa.gov.au/Safety/Guidelines-16146.aspx

Isolation of hazardous energies associated with plant in Western Australian mining operations – guideline

This Significant Incident Report was approved for release by the State Mining Engineer on 14 July 2016