



SAFETY ALERT

Fatality – Repairs to Shearer

INCIDENT

A mine worker received fatal head injuries when he was struck by a shear shaft coupling during a routine repair procedure on a longwall shearer.

CIRCUMSTANCES

A longwall crew was replacing a broken drive shaft on the ranging arm of a longwall shearer. The drive shaft had a spline on each end and required alignment of the splines to be completely installed.

It appears that the drive motor rotated under power, catching and forcibly ejecting the shaft. A coupling housing was flung from the end of the rotating shaft, striking the victim.



INVESTIGATION

The incident is currently under investigation by the Department's Investigation Unit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Detailed recommendations will be made when the investigation is further advanced.

In the mean time, mine operators should ensure that:

- Maintenance procedures include sufficient safeguards to control all energies present during each phase of the task.
- All employees involved in a particular maintenance job are instructed and trained to understand the safe guards built into the maintenance procedures for that job.
- Maintenance safe work procedures are available in the workplace.
- Maintenance work is carried out as specified in safe work procedures.

NOTE: Please ensure all relevant people in your organisation receive a copy of this Safety Alert, and are informed of its content and recommendations. This Safety Alert should be processed in a systematic manner through the mine information and communication process. It should also be placed on the mine notice board.

Signed

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NSW DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES