



# SAFETY ALERT

## Mine worker crushed against rib by remote-controlled continuous miner

### INCIDENT

A Dash 3 continuous miner (CM) was being moved out of a heading when it slewed unexpectedly and trapped a mine worker, who was acting as a cable hand, between the rib and the head of the CM, causing life-threatening injuries.

### CIRCUMSTANCES

A CM operator was training a new operator and was acting as one of the cable hands. The CM was being moved out of a heading with the cable looped over the cutting head of the CM and two mine workers acting as cable hands following the unit.

The trainee CM driver tripped over an object on the roadway while walking backwards and fell to the floor. As the trainee fell, he kept one hand on the remote control and unintentionally slewed the CM towards the rib. At the same time the victim had stepped forward and was trapped between the rib and the head of the CM.

### INVESTIGATION

A detailed investigation has been initiated by the NSW DPI Investigation Unit.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

While specific recommendations are not available until the investigation nears completion, it is recommended that all mines utilising remote-controlled mining equipment should:

- Review risk assessments and ensure they identify and address all significant hazards. Recognition of possible human error is required when undertaking risk assessments

- Ensure the hierarchy of controls is applied to hazards in accordance with clause 5 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001*
- Consider utilising barrier systems that meet the requirements of Australian Standard *AS 4024 Safeguarding of Machinery*
- Carefully consider 'no go' zones, including training for mine personnel
- If applicable, review the standards and procedures against *MDG 5002 Guideline for the use of remote-controlled mining equipment in underground metalliferous mines*.

**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's information and communication process. It should also be placed on the mine's notice board.

**Signed**



**Rob Regan**  
**DIRECTOR**  
**MINE SAFETY OPERATIONS BRANCH**  
**NSW DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES**

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