

Safety Alert

Mines Inspectorate—All mines

Safety Alert No. 291 | 22 June 2012

Fatality on a mine site

What happened?

While working on a conveyor system at a fixed crushing plant, an employee was dragged into the conveyor and suffered fatal injuries.

The conveyor belt was operating at the time of the incident. Guards were not fitted adjacent to the gravity tower loop take-up rollers and grease points.

How did it happen?

The employee was investigating a 'screech' noise coming from the conveyor gantry. In an attempt to fix the noise, the employee carried a grease gun up the attached walkway to the loop take-up rollers. Witnesses state that as he crouched down alongside the operating conveyor he was suddenly pulled into the conveyor between the gantry structure and the roller.

The conveyor was still operating at the time of the incident. The particular area of the conveyor gantry contains several large rollers that require regular maintenance. Guards had not been fitted to this area of the gantry. For further information refer to the *Australian Standard AS1755 – Conveyors - safety requirements*.

Recommendations

1. All sites review operating procedures to ensure that conveyors are isolated correctly before any maintenance is carried out.
2. Suitable guards be fitted on or adjacent to rotating or moving pieces of equipment to prevent people coming into contact with the piece of equipment.
3. Employees be fully trained and assessed as competent to conduct activities on the plant.
4. A full review of safety and health management systems be conducted to identify any deficiencies in isolation procedures, training and assessment, competencies and supervision.

Chris Skelding | Manager Safety and Health, Central Region

Contact: Kevin Clough, Inspector of Mines, +61 7 4967 0869

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