

# SAFETY ALERT



## FITTER SERIOUSLY INJURED BY SPLIT RIM

### INCIDENT

A fitter was taking a wheel off a shuttle car. Tyre pressure blew the rim apart. The tyre and the outer rim blew off the hub, and hit the fitter.

He had bad head and face injuries, broken arms, and a broken knee. He also had wide-spread bruising. When found, he was unconscious.

### CIRCUMSTANCES

The fitter was taking the wheel off a Joy 10SC32B shuttle car to repair the steering assembly. He had taken off all of the wheel assembly nuts, and it seems it was difficult for him to take the wheel off the hub.

He took off some or all of the split rim assembly nuts. The tyre and outer rim then blew off violently and hit him. The impact threw him into the rib and he landed several metres away. The tyre landed on top of him.

### INVESTIGATION

Inspectors from the Department of Mineral Resources are investigating the accident. Investigation so far shows that:

- The mine had been using this type of shuttle car for several months.
- Only the Joy 10SC32B cars at the mine had this sort of bolted split rim assembly system.
- The fitter had only recently begun work at the mine and was not familiar with this type of shuttle car.
- The fitter was not aware of a safe job procedure for taking off wheel assemblies from this type of shuttle car.
- The fitter was an experienced mineworker and had done this sort of work at other mines.
- This sort of accident has happened before in New South Wales, other states and overseas.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

All mines should:

- Carry out an audit to identify **all vehicles** on site which have **split rim assemblies** on the wheels.
- Complete a risk review on hazards associated with the split rims.
- Ensure that the split rim assembly designs have sufficient barriers to prevent anyone from accidentally removing split rim assembly bolts.
- Review safe work procedures to make sure they address all risks associated with vehicles fitted with split rim assemblies.

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- Ensure that only people who have been trained, and have been assessed as competent, are allowed to take wheels off vehicles at the mine.

**NOTE:** The Department has sent out Safety Alerts before about this sort of accident.

For more information, contact Ray Leggett, District Inspector of Coal Mines on (02) 65 721 899 (office) or 0408 424 126 (mobile).

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