

SAFETY ALERT



SERIOUS INJURY INVOLVING STORED ENERGY

INCIDENT

A mineworker received multiple fractures when struck by a tensioned hose and the 0.7 tonne drum from which the hose was being unwound.

CIRCUMSTANCES

A length of 50mm bull-hose was being unwound from a steel drum on the surface of an underground coal mine. The free end of the hose was secured to a parked vehicle. The drum was connected to a forklift with nylon rope and reversed up an access road, rolling the drum back along the ground. When the nylon rope broke, the hose knocked an observer to the ground. The drum then rolled back striking the unconscious man.

INVESTIGATION

The investigation found that in unwinding the hose in the above manner, tension gradually built up in the hose due to the difference in diameter between the drum and the lay of the hose on the drum. It is estimated that the hose had stretched some ten (10) metres after the forklift had reversed sixty (60) metres.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Mine Managers should determine if similar tasks are undertaken at their operations and assess the risk of tension building up in a like manner. Safe procedures should be developed for such tasks which negate the risk and place persons in positions of safety. This Safety Alert should be communicated to the workforce of each mine as an example of the dangers of stored energy and the need for pre-task hazard assessment.

R Regan
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SAFETY OPERATIONS