



# SAFETY ALERT

## DRILLER'S OFF-SIDER INJURED WHILE OPERATING AN EXPLORATION DRILL RIG

### INCIDENT

The rod clamps on an exploration drill rig closed down onto the foot of a driller's off-sider. Fortunately the off-sider did not sustain serious injuries as he was wearing steel capped boots.

### CIRCUMSTANCES

The driller released the foot clamp around the drill rods to raise them towards the top of the mast. The off-sider braced himself by placing his foot on the rod clamp guard to begin the removal of rods. When the rod clamp was closed the off-sider's right foot was dragged down by the closing action of the rod clamps. This resulted in a tear behind the steel cap of the boot which nearly removed his big toenail.



Damaged Boot

### INVESTIGATION

The investigation found that the circumstances of events were as follows:

- Drill rods were being "pulled" using a rod spinner.
- The driller's off-sider braced himself to remove the next rod by placing his right foot on top of the rod clamp guard.
- Without seeing where the off-sider's foot was located, the driller closed the rod clamp as normal practice.
- The rod clamp came down and quickly dragged the boot down with the clamp into the pinch point and caused the injuries.
- The exploration drill rig was a Universal UDR 1000, which are extensively used throughout Australia for exploration.
- The rod clamp guard that was on the rig was not a standard UDR part and did not protect the off-sider's foot from the pinch point of the clamp.
- Universal UDR 1000, 1200 and 650 drill rigs all have the same clamp arrangement.



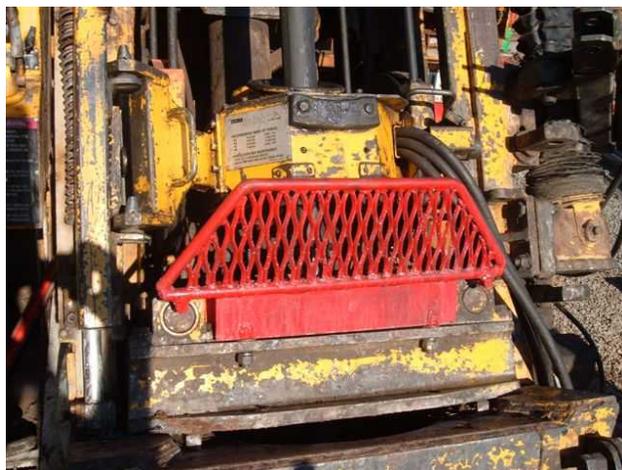
Picture showing rod clamps in open position with existing but apparently inadequate guard (worn red colour). The rod spinner is removed for clarity.

Inadequate guard

## RECOMMENDATIONS

All exploration drill rig owners and operators should review the systems used for guarding of rod clamps on their drill rigs. If deemed necessary, rig owners should replace the guards to ensure pinch point protection is adequate.

Mines should inform the workforce of the hazards associated with drill rigs and assess the adequacy of guarding, especially on Universal UDR 1000, 1200 & 650 drill rigs



Mines should conduct regular workplace inspections and task observations to develop and maintain adequate risk management systems. Where hazards are identified, adequate controls should be put in place to minimise risks.

Picture shows a new guard covering pinch points

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