

SAFETY ALERT



DRILLER FALLS OVER BENCH FACE

INCIDENT

A contract driller fell 9.5 metres backwards over a bench at a quarry. He fell feet first onto fine material which broke his fall. The driller sustained a crushed right heel and lacerations to his upper body. He was taken to hospital.

CIRCUMSTANCES

The driller was fixing the rear brake lights on his light vehicle, which was parked 1.5 to 2 metres from the active edge of the bench.

The driller stepped backwards to check the completed task and fell 9.5 metres backwards over the bench face onto the bench below.

INVESTIGATION

The investigation identified a lack of risk management, including:

- No risk assessment: The operator did not take measures to identify and control the risk of working near an exposed edge. This resulted in the driller repairing his vehicle 1.5 to 2 metres from the exposed edge.
- Lack of supervision: The driller had parked the vehicle at this location for over four hours. As there was no on site contact between the supervisor and the driller, the supervisor was unable to identify or control work hazards, such as the exposed edge.
- Emergency response: The emergency response procedure implemented as a result of the incident was not in the Mine Safety Management Plan. Unqualified site personnel took the injured driller to hospital by private vehicle without calling an ambulance. As a result the injured driller could have been placed in danger.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Review Contractor Management Plans to ensure site specific risk assessments are conducted prior to tasks being undertaken. This will help identify and control risks and hazards.
2. Ensure that personnel are trained in and use risk assessment and safe work procedures when conducting hazardous or new tasks.
3. Ensure barriers or identifying markers for no go zones are placed along all exposed active edges where work is undertaken. Non active benches or exposed edges should have berms at half of the highest wheel height of vehicles used on site. This helps to prevent drive overs and roll overs.
4. Ensure there are appropriate levels of supervision for all employees and contractors who perform work activities.
5. Ensure all people who attend the site have an appropriate level of understanding and training in emergency situations to minimise the risk of injury.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R Regan".

R Regan

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ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SAFETY OPERATIONS