

Mine Incident | Operator's hair ripped out by borer

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In an incident this week the operator of a borer's hair become entangled in machinery and was ripped from his head.

In a mine incident, this past week an operator's hair was ripped out following entanglement with a handheld borer. The incident highlights the risks of entanglement of clothing and body parts when working with machinery.

What happened in the mine incident?

According to a report from the NSW Resources Regulator, a work crew was installing secondary ground support using a handheld boring machine. Two workers were operating the borer. The workers, positioned either side of the machine, were leaning against the borer to apply force. The operator on the left-hand side of the borer lost his footing on wet ground and slipped. This movement caused his hair, which was tied back in a pony-tail, to become

entangled with the rotating drill steel.



What emergency actions were initiated?

According to the mine incident report, the operator immediately stopped the borer. The hair from the right side of the operator's head was ripped out by the drill steel. The injured operator was assessed by the work group underground and transported to the surface for medical attention. The operator was transferred offsite for further medical attention. The incident site was immediately demarcated as a non-disturbance area.

Are there any lessons mines can learn from this incident?

Mine operators should review the adequacy of their safety management system with regard to managing the risks of entanglement with machinery. Long hair presents an elevated risk if additional controls are not implemented.

What can individual miners do to prevent this mine incident?

When working with machinery, miners should ensure that any loose fitting items of clothing are secured against their bodies. Hair should be contained (in hair nets or inside helmets) to prevent contact with rotating components.