

FACT SHEET

Planned Inspection Program – Structural collapse

Underground and surface coal operations

August 2021

Structural collapse is a hazard which can occur within various mining environments and has the potential to cause serious and/or fatal injuries to workers if not controlled effectively.

This fact sheet outlines the critical controls for the risk of structural collapse within the coal mining sector and should be considered by mine operators when assessing the risk at their operation.

We have commenced a program of planned inspections and targeted assessments which will focus on the following critical controls, ensuring compliance across the coal mining industry in NSW.



Structural integrity

Plant and structures remain structurally stable while performing their design function for the duration of their operational life.



Traffic management

Plant and structures are protected from mobile equipment impact damage.

Operate within design limits

Plant and structures operate safely within the load and duty cycle that they were designed for.



Repair modification quality assurance

Structural repairs or modifications preserve structure stability.

Corrosion protection

Use barrier coatings, avoid moisture, and use non-corrosive metals to maintain the structural integrity of plant or structures.

Considerations

Mine operators should consider the above criteria, as a minimum, and ensure that relevant information is included within their respective principal hazard management plans and associated documentation.

Following investigations into structural collapse incidents, it is evident that non-compliance with these key control measures have contributed to incident outcomes, which has caused both severe and fatal injuries to workers.

When identifying and implementing control measures, mine operators are also reminded to follow the hierarchy of controls to ensure health and safety risks are minimised, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Other relevant safety alerts and bulletins published by the Regulator:

DATE PUBLISHED	REFERENCE	TITLE
Mar 2001	SA01-08	Silo collapse highlights structural issues
Aug 2019	Code of Practice	Managing the risks of plant in the workplace
Dec 2018	SA18-15	Walkway collapse puts workers at risk
Nov 2017	Consolidated Report	Structural integrity of coal handling and preparation plants
Nov 2016	SA16-06	Sudden failure of feed hopper
Sep 2016	Code of Practice	Mechanical engineering control plan
April 2009	SA09-07	Structural failure and collapse of drill rig mast
Jan 2007	SA07-03	Structural bin failure
Oct 2006	SA06-17	Failure of scaffolding

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