

## Hydraulic Lock Lost Time Injury

A Carnell employee sustained an open fracture to his index finger and lacerations to his middle finger when he removed a bolt within an excavator breaker attachment. The injured party (IP) received 5 stitches and underwent minor surgery under a local anaesthetic to 'pin' the open fracture. Fortunately, the employee is expected to make a full recovery and was able to return to work 2 days after the incident occurred.



The employee sustained the injuries as he attempted to relieve excess hydraulic pressure known as 'Hydraulic Lock' which prevents the hydraulic hoses being attached to the excavator couplings. This can occur when any hydraulic attachment is:

- Disconnected without the operator first removing the pressure
- Left in hot/cold conditions
- Dropped or impacted

The IP, without any training, attempted to remove the hydraulic lock himself by loosening the nuts at the hydraulic coupling. When this did not work the IP contacted the plant supplier to arrange for a plant fitter to attend site. Whilst waiting for the plant fitter the IP identified a bolt within the body of the breaker attachment and, without any knowledge or experience, loosened the bolt until it ejected at speed into his fingers.