



Dangerous Goods Safety Bulletin No. 0112

Subject: Inadequate security involving explosives in underground mining equipment

Date: 19 April 2012

Background

There have been two incidents within the past month where explosive items were left unaccounted for in underground elevated work platforms and charge baskets at mine sites. The explosives were only discovered some time later, after the equipment returned to the surface. In one case, welding work was carried out on the machinery in very close proximity to the explosives (boosters and a detonator) before they were discovered.

Hazard

Insufficient inventory control of explosives can lead to the loss of explosives. When certifying equipment as free from explosives at the end of an explosive task, a lack of care and attention could lead to death or serious injury.

Requirements

Explosives should be regarded as attractive and accountable items, and it is a legislative requirement for explosives to be controlled and managed by a responsible person at all times. A complete audit trail relating to the supply, issue and use of explosives is required. Where explosives are unaccounted for, their loss must be investigated and measures taken to ensure that the loss does not occur again.

Recommendations

To reduce the likelihood of an explosives security breach or explosives being left unaccounted for in or on machinery, users should:

- ensure that a minimum of two persons certify machinery and equipment as free from explosives
- ensure that adequate resources, including sufficient lighting, are available to conduct a thorough inspection of equipment
- conduct stock reconciliation actions against blast plans, both pre- and post-blast
- conduct appropriate magazine stock reconciliation against explosive use in accordance with the explosives regulations
- provide refresher training for persons involved in the consigning, issuing and receiving, use and disposal of explosives.

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