

Investigation information release

Date: January 2025

Worker suffers serious injury while working on unguarded section of a fixed conveyor

Incident date: 2 December 2024

Location: Clarence Sands Quarry – Old Bells Line of Road Newnes Plateau, NSW

Overview

A worker suffered a serious injury to his arm while working on an unguarded section of a conveyor.

The mine

Clarence Sands is an open cut quarry about 20 km from Lithgow in New South Wales. The mine is operated by Clarence Sands Pty Limited. Sandstone is processed on site, with the washery capable of producing up to 300 tonnes of sand per hour.

The sand produced at the quarry is supplied for construction purposes. The wash plant includes several conveyors that transport material from the feeder through a screen and then to stockpiles.

The incident

A worker was adjusting the tail arm adjustment screw about 7pm on 2 December 2024. The tail adjustment screw was positioned in an unguarded section on the fixed conveyor.

As the worker was attempting to adjust the screw to reposition the belt on the tail drum, the worker's right arm became entangled with the belt and rollers, resulting in a serious injury. A second worker operating a loader nearby responded to the incident. NSW Ambulance attended the site and transferred the injured worker to hospital where he later underwent surgery.

The conveyor was purchased from CMQ Engineering Pty Ltd and was installed and commissioned the day before the incident, 1 December 2024.

Investigation information release IIR25-01

Figure 1: The conveyor and belt alignment arm

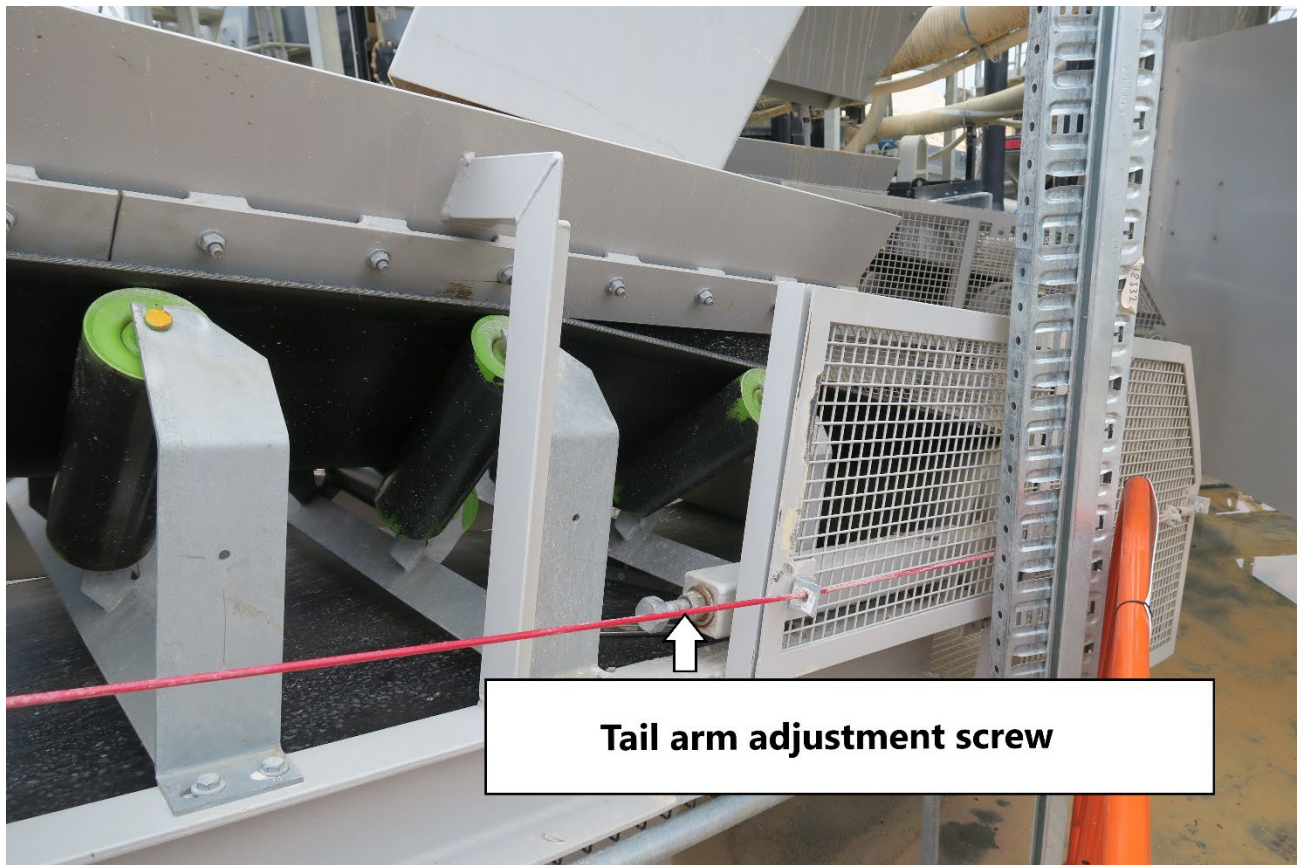
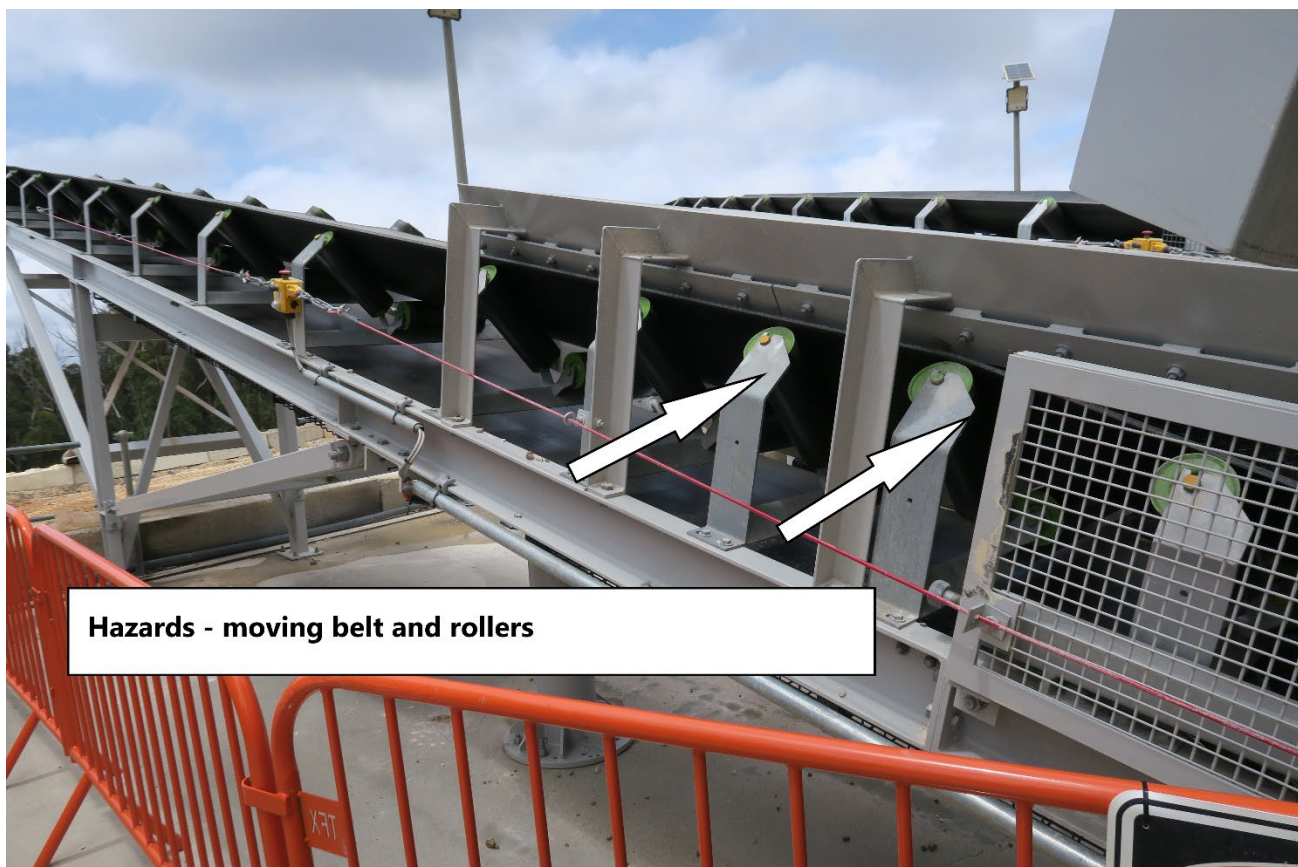


Figure 2: Identified hazards – moving rollers and belt



Investigation information release IIR25-01

The investigation

The Resources Regulator has commenced an investigation to determine the cause and circumstances of the incident that will explore, among other things:

- the design of the plant involved in the incident
- instruction, training, and supervision provided to workers regarding the work task of realigning conveyor belts
- the adequacy of the quarry operators' safety management system regarding managing hazards and risks associated with working on fixed plant, including conveyors.

The quarry operator, designer/manufacturer and workers are assisting with the investigation. A report will be published at the conclusion of the investigation.

Further information

Please refer to the following for guidance:

- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
 - Section 19 – Primary duty of care
- Work Health and Safety Regulations 2017 Part 5.1 General duties for plant and structures, in particular
 - clause 189 – design requirement for guarding
 - clause 194 – manufacturers requirements for guarding
 - clause 204 – Control of risks arising from installation or commissioning
 - clause 208 – Guarding
- Australia Standards AS4024.1, in particular:
 - 4024.1201 – Safety of machinery, general principles for design and risk reduction
 - 4024.1601 – Safety of machinery, design of controls, interlocks and guarding, guards general requirements for the design and construction of fixed and moveable guards
 - 4024.1801 – Safety distances to prevent danger zones being reached by upper and lower limbs.
- SafeWork NSW Code of practice – Managing the risks of plant in the workplace in particular:
 - 4.1 – Guarding plant
- Resources Regulator presentation on entanglement hazards March 2023

About this information release

The Regulator has issued this information to draw attention to the occurrence of a serious incident in the mining industry. Further information may be published as it becomes available.

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- learn more about our work on causal investigations and emergency response
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Investigation information release IIR25-01

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Document control	
CM10 reference	RDOC24/227228
Mine safety reference	IIR25-01
Date published	16 January 2025
Authorised by	Chief Investigator