

SAFETY ALERT



DRILL RIG NEAR MISS

INCIDENT

A drill rig came very close to the edge of a 12-15 metre high quarry face. The driller was very lucky that the drill rig did not fall over the edge. He was not hurt.



CIRCUMSTANCES

The driller put the rig parallel to the face of the quarry, because the ground was uneven and there was not much room. Usually drill rigs are put at a right angle to the face.

When the driller reversed to get ready to drill the next hole, the rig lost grip and slipped. The driller tried to get the drill rig back into place, but it slewed around and slipped even closer to the edge of the quarry.

The photo at left shows how close the drill rig came to the edge of the quarry face.

INVESTIGATION

- The design of the quarry meant that there was not enough room for the driller to put the rig at right angles to the quarry face.
- The driller could only get to the drilling spot from one direction.
- The driller did not know how close to the edge of the quarry he was.
- There were no markers (or bunding) in place to show where the quarry face started.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Mines to review the hazards, procedures and controls associated with bench drilling.
- Controls should include:
 - ♦ Blast plans which reduce restrictions to access and work areas.
 - ♦ A formal assessment process to identify hazards and to put controls in place before drilling starts.
 - ♦ Bunding of high walls as a routine part of safe work practices.
 - ♦ The use of documented procedures to manage high-risk activities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Regan'.

R Regan
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SAFETY OPERATIONS