

SAFETY ALERT

Date 19-04-16

Scheme:

Location of Incident:

INCIDENT DETAILS

On Tuesday evening (19-04-16) whilst pulling rods back from a horizontal directional drill shot, a subcontract drilling operative sustained several serious injuries.

The injuries were as a result of stored energy within the rods and initial poor communication between the rig operator and the drilling operative.

Due to problematic ground conditions the reamer was being reversed out of the bore hole. Drilling rods were being disconnected on the reception pit side by the subcontract operative. As the first rod was pushed through the subcontract operative began the disconnection process. The rig operator then loaded the second rod and proceeded to push the second rod through despite the fact that the operative was still disconnecting the first rod.

To disconnect the first rod the operative had restrained the rods with Stilsons. When the second rod was loaded by the rig operator the turning effect of the rods, coupled with the restraining effect of the disconnection process created stored energy within the rods.

When the energy was released from the rods the operative was thrown into the air and suffered several injuries, including a fractured Fibula to his right leg, a pelvic injury and blow to the head. The injuries are not life threatening and the operative will remain in hospital for 48 hours for observation.



Initial Findings

- Communication Failure. The procedure for communication between rig operator and reception team requires review and improvement
- Method statement requires review to consider communication channels and identify who is in overall control
- The method statement requires review to accurately state in detail how rods will be disconnected
- The mechanism within the method statement for dealing with changing site conditions requires review
- Consideration needs to be given to the impact of stored energy within the rods, and the control measures required during the disconnection process
- Start of shift briefings were carried out. A review of this process will be undertaken to ensure the briefing encompasses all aspects and risks from site activities

Immediate Corrective Action(s)

- All site operations halted until a further safe system of work has been established for managing and controlling the rod disconnection process

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- Revised method statement required to accommodate changing site conditions – to be briefed to all staff
 - Clear communication channels to be established and briefed at the start of each shift
 - If changes are made to working teams, during the shift, teams must be debriefed before commencing any further work activities
 - Review and briefing on the significant elements of the method statement relevant to the day's activities to be undertaken