

NZ Safety Alert

31 July 2020

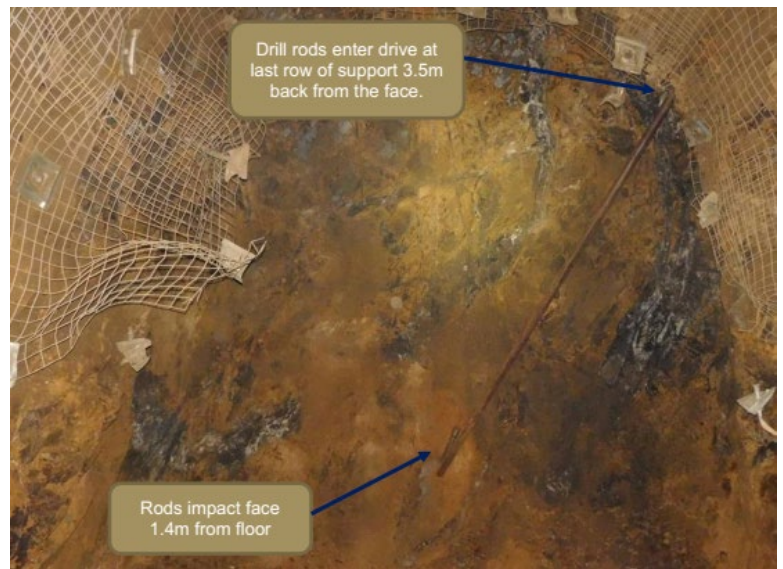
Let's work together to keep ourselves and our workers safe

Drill rods fall from underground strata

A loader was reversing from the face in an underground operation when diamond drill rods dropped rapidly from the last row of ground support (3.5m from face) and struck the face.

Two years earlier an exploration hole was diamond drilled from the surface to the depth of the proposed mining. Issues were encountered with ground conditions resulting in a number of drill rods being left in the hole.

The drill hole was marked on the development plan but there was no reference to it containing lost rods.



MinEx data on incidents with the potential to cause harm over the 30 months to Dec 2019 show 18% of all incidents (452 incidents) involve falls, 139 of which resulted from fall of equipment.

Underground mines and tunnels need to ensure that:

1. Development designs and plans include known voids or drill holes, grout, lost equipment, and any water intersections.
2. You review and update underground risk registers to ensure they address potential interaction with surface drill holes.
3. You document, implement and communicate the process for authorisation and effective control of abandoned drill rods in UG mining and tunneling operations.

Know of an incident or near miss? Please share the learnings with us.