

NZ Safety Alert

11 December 2020

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

Excavator uncovers misfire

A digger was moving rock from the quarry pit when the operator saw a detonator and booster in the digger bucket. The operator stopped and advised the quarry manager who then advised the current blasting contractor and requested them to check the explosive.

The detonator and booster were from a previous shot and were subsequently placed in a safe area, this area was then isolated off. The blasting contractor gave advice and removed the explosive from the site to be stored in a safe location prior to disposal.

Recently there have been a number of incidents where unexploded product has been discovered in muck piles.



MinEx data on incidents with the potential to cause harm over the 36 months to June 2020 show 6% of all incidents (176 incidents) involve potential release of pressure, 59 of which involved explosives.

You need to ensure that:

1. A misfire procedure is developed and explained to all workers.
2. Workers treat any explosive components found while quarrying (after blasting) as live, and immediately isolate the area and implement the misfire procedure.
3. Ensure pre-ignition tie-in inspections are conducted so all tie-ins are checked by at least the shotfirer and one other person.
4. Ensure post-blast inspections are properly conducted to identify areas of potential misfires.

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