

ERM Safety Alert – Air Line from Compressor Detachment



Event: Air Line from Compressor Detachment
Activity: Using Air Rotary Drilling During An ESA
Location: Queensland, Australia
Date: April 2010

Description of Incident

- The drill crew was in the process of air hammering at a monitoring well location. After a rod change the crew re-engaged the compressor;
- The air line between the rig and compressor immediately detached at the rig end whilst under pressure;
- Emergency shutdown on the compressor was engaged within 1-2 seconds by the crew member operating the compressor; and
- The hose was contained behind the rig cage for the period it was disconnected and pressurised. No injuries or damage occurred.

What Contributed?

- The air line had not been correctly fixed to the rig by its "Whip Checks" or via safety pins. The drill crew was aware of this equipment fault yet proceeded drilling;
- The Whip Checks attached to the hose were not a sufficient length to secure to existing anchor points. This issue was identified previously by the drillers. The air hose being used remained in service. The equipment should have been tagged out as soon as the issue was identified; and
- Although the lead driller holds ultimate responsibility, there were other members of the drill crew that were aware of the situation yet did not intervene.

WHAT DID WE LEARN?

This near miss serves as a reminder about the potential hazards associated with introducing air pressure into any system.

- *The subcontractor crew knowingly took short cuts and didn't follow their procedures;*
- *During Tool Box talks, reinforce importance of using Whip Checks and safety pins;*
- *Foster a culture with subcontractors whereby intervention is promoted; and*
- *Update our JSAs to reflect that when working with compressed air, measures are to be taken to ensure that Whip Checks and safety pins are secured.*



Correct method for attaching hose at rig end.



Split pins (Safety Pins) shown here should have been in place as an additional safety mechanism on all hoses with such fittings.

This Safety Alert was contributed by Bennett Warren and Lachlan McQuire, ERM Brisbane