

NOVEMBER 2026

Incident Periodical

Coal Mines Inspectorate

Resources Safety & Health Queensland

November 2026 periodical overview

This edition covers:

- collision between underground vehicles
- non-electrical workers in electrical incidents
- high-voltage cable damage
- spotlight on hand injuries.

Periodicals published by Resources Safety and Health Queensland's (RSHQ) Coal Mines Inspectorate have consistently communicated that administrative controls are less effective than controls from the higher end of the hierarchy of controls.

Investigations must identify the higher-order controls, such as engineering, isolation, substitution and elimination, before applying less effective controls such as administrative or personal protective equipment (PPE).

Collision between underground vehicles

An underground grader approaching an intersection and a personnel carrier travelling outbye were both sounding their horns as they approached a corner.

Despite both operators applying their brakes, the vehicles collided on the outbye side of the corner.

Both vehicles were unable to stop safely and avoid the collision. No injuries were sustained.



Recommendations

Review traffic management controls. Consider whether block lights, improved lighting or proximity detection systems could better manage visibility and traffic interactions.

Non-electrical workers in electrical incidents

Recent incidents

Non-electrical workers continue to be involved in serious electrical incidents at Queensland coal mines. In several recent events, workers acting as safety observers or spotters did not fully understand the electrical hazard, or the purpose of the control they were providing.

RSHQ's Coal Mines Inspectorate is reviewing the training provided to non-electrical workers at Queensland coal mines during the remainder of 2026-27.

Recommendations

Supervisors must ensure that:

- spotters and safety observers understand their task and responsibilities
- the role of the spotter or safety observer contributes to controlling the hazard or situation.



Evidence of direct electrical short from non-electrical worker using a tape measure to measure the height from the overhead conductor to the substation frame.

High-voltage cable damage at coal mines

Half of all electrical incidents in Queensland coal mines are caused by damage to trailing cables. These incidents present significant risks and have the potential to result in serious injury, or in extreme cases, a fatality.

Evidence indicates that non-electrical workers completing routine tasks are involved in many of these incidents.

It is important to follow site procedures and ensure appropriate controls are in place when observing or undertaking tasks near electrical infrastructure.



High voltage trailing cable entangled in mobile plant exposing conductors. Exposed conductors present risk of electrocution or explosion in an underground coal mine.

Spotlight: hand injuries



The hand: indispensable but vulnerable

- Hand, wrist and finger injuries were the most reported injury location in Queensland coal mines from January 2025 to September 2026.
- The hand is one of the body's most complex and heavily used working structures, providing the strength, sensation and dexterity needed to perform everyday tasks.
- Injuries that appear minor can affect grip strength, fine motor control and the ability to safely perform routine work activities.

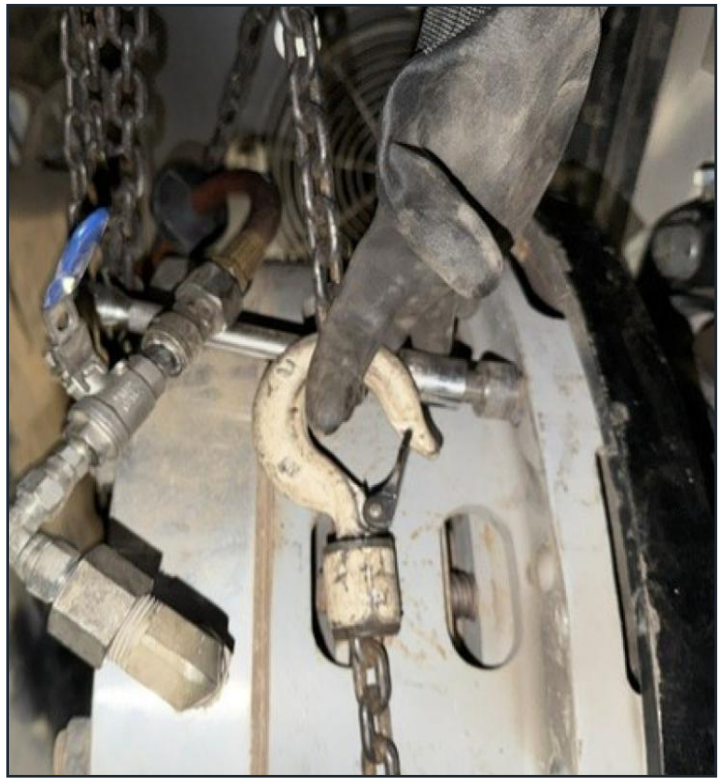
90

Hand, wrist and finger injuries
Most reported injury location

Top 5 injury locations reported to RSHQ: Jan 2025 – Sep 2026

Hand, wrist and finger injuries	**90**
Arm	64
Back	52
Ankle	30
Knee	28

Injury spotlight: recent hand injuries

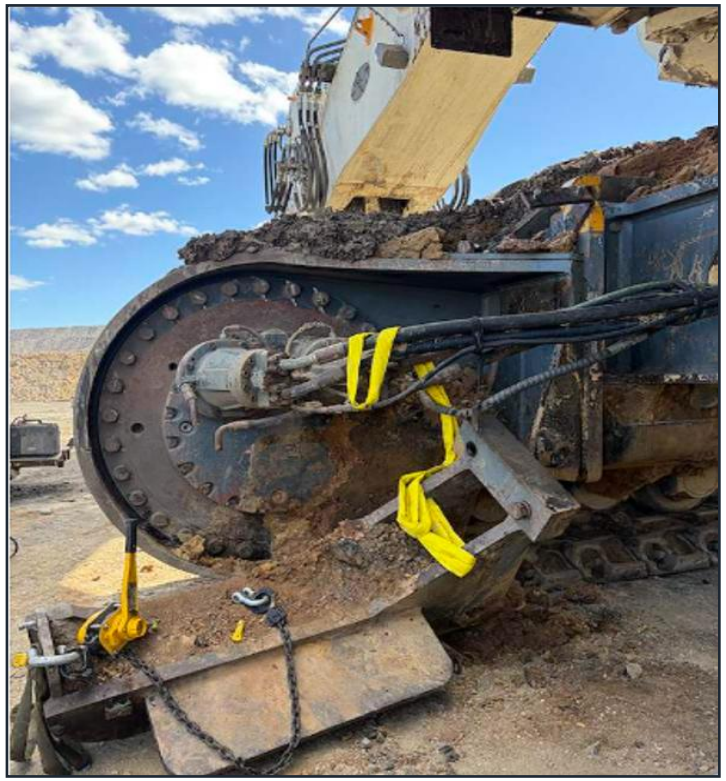


CMW's hand was pinched between the lifting hook and the load when tension was put on the chain.

Coal mine workers (CMWs) must identify the hazards and implement effective controls to prevent exposure to line-of-fire incidents.

Keeping hands clear of pinch points when taking tension on lifting chains will prevent serious injury.

Uncontrolled movement of suspended loads (gravity), release of pressure (stored energy) and uptake of tension (mechanical energy) may require additional controls including lifting equipment or dunnage.



Serious hand injury resulting from uncontrolled movement of travel motor guard on 600t excavator.

Noticeboard

Ahead of mandatory critical controls requirements starting on 1 June 2026, RSHQ published QGN 35, The integration of critical controls into principal hazard management plans.

Additional support material is now available on the Business Queensland website.

Access QGN 35 support material

Safety notices

Safety Alert 485

Serious accident involving a pressurised compressed-air system and mobile equipment

Safety Alert 484

Contraband and unauthorised ignition sources underground in coal mines

Safety Alert 483

Coal mine worker struck by rotating dragline

Safety Alert 482

Fatal accident involving light vehicle at coal mine

Safety Alert 481

Dead-man control defeated on QDS bolter

Quick links

Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999

Recognised standards

RSHQ regulatory priorities

Periodicals

Upcoming forums

Presentations