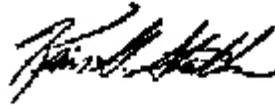


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PROGRAM INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. P11-33

FROM:

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SUBJECT:

Re-Issue of P07-12 - Best Practices for Turning Crosscuts with
Remote Controlled Continuous Mining Machines

Who needs this information?

This Program Information Bulletin (PIB) is intended for coal mine operators, miners' representatives, Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) enforcement personnel, and other interested parties.

What is the purpose of this bulletin?

This Program Information Bulletin (PIB) informs the mining community of several best practices that can be followed when remote controlled continuous mining machines are used to turn crosscuts. These best practices could help reduce the number of roof fall accidents associated with the mining of crosscuts using these machines. This PIB is a reissue of P07-12 and contains updated information.

Information

The following best practices have been identified as having the potential to reduce the number of roof fall accidents when crosscuts are turned with remote controlled continuous mining machines:

1. Use a notch or niche cut. A notch or niche cut is a shallow, triangular-shaped, initial cut (a single miner head in width) taken when turning a crosscut. The notch or niche cut is bolted to provide a buffer between the

continuous miner operator and unsupported roof created as the remainder of the crosscut is mined. If this option is used, it should be approved in the Roof Control plan.

2. Limit the depth of the first cut when turning a crosscut.
3. Allow the remote controlled continuous miner operator to be positioned up the straight on the inby side of the intersection.
4. Limit the number of "turned crosscuts," thereby mining most of the crosscuts "head-on."
5. Install additional roof support at the continuous mining machine operator's projected work location.
6. Use visual indicators, such as reflective markers, to designate a "no work/travel zone," commonly referred to as a "Red Zone."

What is the background for this PIB?

Fifteen fatal roof fall accidents involving remote controlled continuous mining machine operators and helpers have occurred since January 1, 2001. A review of these accidents reveals that three occurred while a crosscut was being turned and four occurred while mining was being conducted adjacent to a crosscut. In six of the seven accidents improper operator positioning was a contributing factor. In three of these accidents the victim was located under unsupported roof. In the other three accidents, the victim was located in a "no work/travel zone," as defined in that mine's roof control plan.

The importance of proper operator positioning when remote controlled continuous mining machines are used has long been recognized. However, these recent fatal accidents indicate that increased safety awareness is needed by these machine operators when turning crosscuts. Factors such as visibility, dust, equipment crowding, location of ventilation devices and trailing cables also complicate the issue of proper operator positioning while crosscuts are being turned. From underground observations in numerous mines, MSHA has identified six currently-used best practices (described above) which can help to minimize the hazards encountered when crosscuts are turned with remote controlled continuous mining machines.

What is MSHA's authority for this PIB?

The Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977, as amended, 30 U.S.C. § 801 et seq.; 30 C.F.R. part 75, Subpart C.

Is this PIB on the Internet?

This PIB may be viewed on the World Wide Web by accessing the MSHA home page (www.msha.gov) and then choosing "Compliance Info" and "Program Information Bulletins."

Who are the MSHA contact persons for this PIB?

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Who will receive this PIB?

MSHA Program Policy Manual Holders

Underground Coal Mine Operators

Miners' Representatives

Coal Special Interest Groups