

EVENT LEARNING

Safety & Sustainable Development

006

Incident Date / Time:	15th July 2013 / 14:15 hours
Location:	Borders Railway Project, mining remediation works.
Works Taking Place / Incident Type:	Drilling / RIDDOR reportable injury accident
Issued By:	Hugh Wark, Project Director
Project Name / Number:	Borders Railway Project / 129713
For the attention of:	All Scotland and North East

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT

Drill rods were being withdrawn from a probe hole. The assistant driller placed the rod spanner in the lower keyway below the coupling to begin disengaging the rod. The rod spanner began to slip free of the keyway as the connecting rods rose. After the drill head was stopped from raising the assistant driller reached in to slide the spanner back into place. The impact of sliding the spanner back into place caused the rods to drop from the drill shank and crushed his fingers between the spanner and the casing below. The injury to the tip of one finger required a section of damaged bone to be removed and the finger reshaped under local anaesthetic.

CAUSES

The injured person handled the spanner by the head, rather than the handle. This resulted in them being able to place their hand between two metal surfaces.

Following the accident, the rod spanner has been modified with the addition of a secondary handle to the top of the main spanner handle. This will provide a hand guard on the spanner and encourage the correct use of the tool.



Photograph showing rod spanner with secondary handle added

The reader is required to take action where appropriate to implement the following:

- Employers and our Principal Contractors are required to make sure that the risks associated with any task have been adequately identified, properly briefed before work starts and that proper controls are in place.
- When you are on site be prepared to question and challenge work methods if you are unsure or think that the proposed task may be unsafe. Ensure that the right equipment for the task is available before you start work.
- Discuss this event at your next safety meeting or with your supervisor, is there a work process that you are concerned about? Do you know of a similar activity that would benefit from the lessons learned from this event?



Never undertake an activity unless you have been trained, assessed as competent and have the right equipment.