

# Safety Alert



Explosives

Explosives Inspectorate

Safety Alert No. 51 | 18 October 2011

## Detonators initiated at scrap metal recyclers

### What happened?

A steel coal stacker unit was being dismantled at a scrap metal yard by an operator using oxy cutting equipment when **3 out of 6 detonators inside the stacker unit exploded**. The operator, who was wearing protective clothing, was showered with detonator casing fragments but was not injured.

### Recommendations

1. All plant, equipment and vehicles used in connection with explosives must be certified free from explosives when being decommissioned.
2. The blast area and associated equipment must be certified free from explosives before disposal.
3. Anyone who certifies items as free from explosives must advise recyclers and other disposal facilities that they have been declared free from explosives. A certificate must be provided.
4. All licence holders and contractors should ensure that safety management systems and security plans address the decommissioning of plant, equipment, vehicles and demolition.
5. All licence holders and contractors should ensure that these procedures are followed and records are kept.



Figure 1. Damage to stacker unit from detonator explosion



Figure 2. Recovered detonators

Authorised by **Geoff Downs** | Chief Inspector of Explosives

For more information, call **1300 739 868**

Place the alert on noticeboards and ensure all relevant people in your organisation receive a copy.

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Southern Region Office

sroexplosives@dme.qld.gov.au

Central Region Office

croexplosives@dme.qld.gov.au

Northern Region Office

nroexplosives@dme.qld.gov.au