



SAFETY ALERT FOR FLETCHER OPERATOR CANOPIES SEPTEMBER 2003

This bulletin was issued in response to a previous alert from J.H. Fletcher regarding canopies. It was posted in July of 2003. It may be viewed using [this link](#).

For a complete version of this bulletin, please use [this link](#).

All Fletcher roof bolters use or can use operator protection canopies. Most of these canopies are attached to an extendible support post actuated by a hydraulic cylinder within the post. A single large bolt connects the inner tube of the support post to the cylinder rod. This connection is critical to the safe operation of the canopy.

A near miss recently occurred because of an unexpected drop of the driller canopy. When the operator activated the canopy lower control lever, the canopy did not immediately lower and remained in the raised position, and then dropped unexpectedly. The malfunction was due to the cylinder and support post connection bolt becoming loose or damaged, and eventually failing. Anytime the canopy control lever is activated and the canopy does not lower, do not remain under the canopy. The cause of any support post connection malfunction should be evaluated and repaired immediately by maintenance personnel.

In response to this near miss J.H. Fletcher & Co. recommends that all operators be made aware of this potential problem and emphasizes that the service manual requirement of weekly torque checks be performed to ensure that the bolt is tightened to 150ft-Ibs (see Attachment 1). Fletcher requires the inspection of this connection bolt as part of the weekly torque check. In addition, always check for correct control functions before operating this machine.

Fletcher now offers a cap (part number: 381113) to prevent dirt and debris from filling up the bolt access hole, providing quicker and easier access to the canopy bolt for inspection (see Attachment 2).

As an alternative to the existing design that requires the bolt torque inspection, Fletcher has developed a support post and cylinder design that eliminates the bolt altogether (see Attachment 3). The new design uses a pin to connect the cylinder rod to the support post inner tube. The pin is held in place by the canopy or support post cap. You can exchange your existing post and cylinder for this new design through our service department or an authorized distributor, or upgrade it during your machine or boom modernization. This new design will be installed on all new Fletcher equipment.

Please provide a copy of this bulletin to all personnel who operate or have access to a Fletcher machine, including maintenance personnel.

Contact Fletcher or an authorized distributor for price and availability of the design enhancement shown in Attachment 3 or the canopy cap in Attachment 2.

If you have any questions regarding this bulletin or the information provided within, please call David P. Cooper in the Risk Management Department at (304) 525-7811, Ex.240 or by email at dcooper@jhletcher.com.